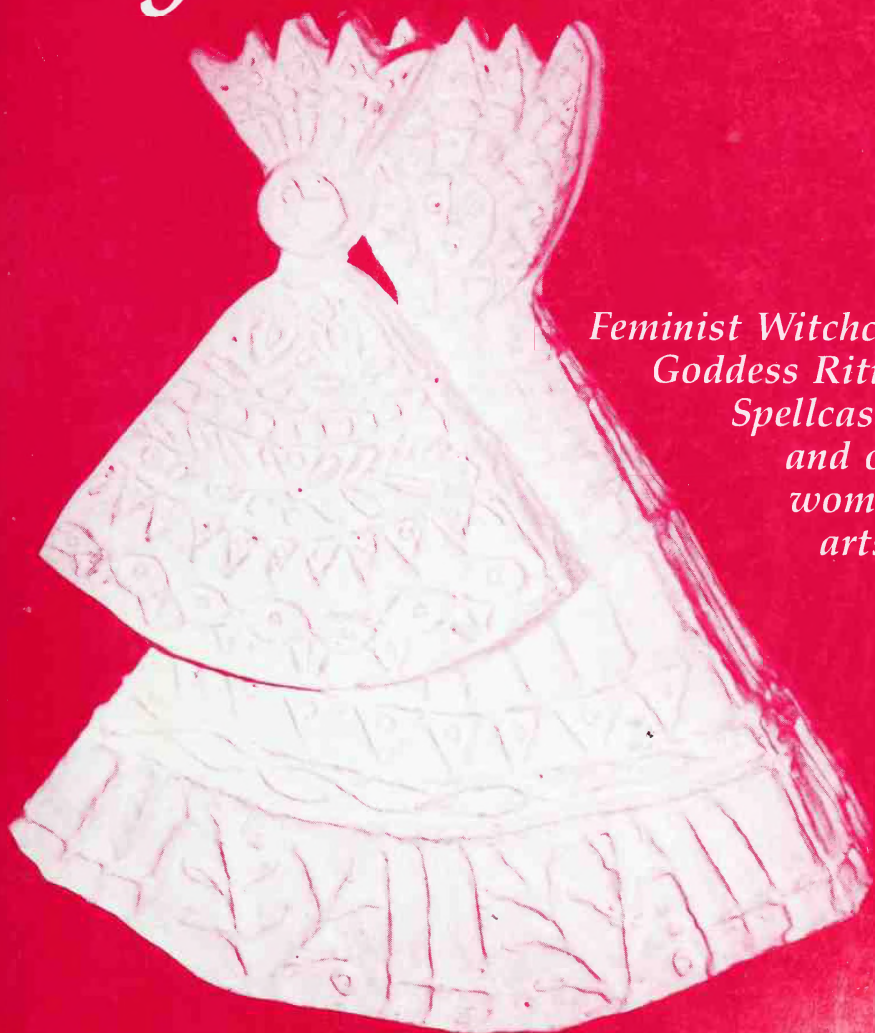


The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries

VOLUME I
Revised Edition



*Feminist Witchcraft,
Goddess Rituals,
Spellcasting,
and other
womanly
arts . . .*

by Zsuzsanna Budapest

The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries

VOLUME I



by Zsuzsanna Budapest

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Sculptures are from Masika Szilágyi's show, "From the Pagan Temple," given at the Modern Museum in Budapest, © 1977. ON THE COVER: "Madonna with Child." PART 1: "Persephone Rising"; PART 2: "The Source" (Goddess and her children on her shoulders), partial side view, page 70; PART 3: "In Lotus Position"; PART 4: "Goddess of Happiness and Self-Esteem," also called "The Glad Woman"; PART 5: "The Goddess of Oneness and Balance." Nine Anderson's illustration of the great god Pan, playing his flute divinely, is shown on page 143.

Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1

Member of C.O.G.

P.O. Box 11363

Oakland, CA 94611

Blessed Be

LOVELY GODDESS of the bow!
Lovely Goddess of the arrows!
Of all hounds and of all hunting
Thou who wakest in starry heaven
When the sun is sunk in slumber
Thou with moon upon thy forehead,
Who the chase by night preferest
Unto hunting in the daylight,
With thy nymphs into the music
Of the horn—thyself the huntress,
And most powerful: I pray thee
Think, although but for an instant,
Upon us who pray unto thee!
BLESSED BE.

Acknowledgments

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Dedication

I CALL UPON THEE,

GAIA: Primeval Prophetess; First among the Goddesses and gods;

THEMIS: Oracular Power of the Earth, Social Justice without which there is no human society;

DIKE: Goddess of the Natural Order, Messenger, Wind Goddess;

Bring this work to Your favors. Let Your truth be heard and never again denied!

Blessed be.

In the Beginning there was the Word. That Word was Mother, Inna, Mu, Anya, Nammu, Ua Zit, Mary, Marianne, La Mer, and all those born of mothers uttered the Word, for they knew Her as the Source. So it is now.

In the beginning there was my mother, Masika, who taught me to talk to the winds, to cast spells, to read cards, palms, and stars; to respect the life in myself and in others; to read between the lines; to see through the lies; to survive and to thrive.

In the beginning there was Clay, and Masika put thoughts into Clay and the Clay talked. Spirit talk. In Her Goddess position, her favorite piece, the Angel, taught me how to pray. This Angel is still here, still teaching.

There were clay tablets with verses and rhymes, created in trance when Masika touched other lifetimes—Egyptian lifetimes—very ancient. Those lifetimes still hum in her body. The hums connected, the clay tablets connected, creations to creations connected, and I connected to Her—over and over again.

Self-Blessing Ritual

THIS RITUAL should be performed before doing any magical work.

Begin after sundown. Prepare your altar with two white candles anointed with van van oil, blessing oil, or your favorite ritual oil. The altar is dressed in white and the chalice is filled with half wine and half water. Sprinkle salt on the floor and stand barefoot upon it.

Light your altar candles, saying: "Blessed be thou, creature of fire." Light meditation incense or peace incense.

Dip each forefinger into the chalice; touch your forehead, and say: "Bless me Mother, for I am thy child."

Dip your fingers again and touch your eyes, saying: "Bless my eyes to see your ways."

Dip again and touch your nose, saying: "Bless my nose to smell your essence."

Dip and touch your mouth, saying: "Bless my mouth to speak of you."

Dip and touch your breasts, saying: "Bless my breasts, formed in strength and beauty."

Dip and touch your genitals, saying: "Bless my genitals that create life as you have brought forth the universe."

Finally, dip and touch your feet, saying: "Bless my feet that I may walk on your path."

Take a little time before extinguishing the candles. You shall experience a surge of energy and lightness of heart. Blessed be.

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Foreword

by Phyllis Chesler

WE ARE BLESSED by Z's presence amongst us. Long may she live!

Ah my Priestess: mother, daughter, sister, friend, "thou hast ravished my heart" with the courage of thy womb and with thy redolent pagan ways.

*How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse!
How much better is thy love than wine!*

*My beloved is gone down into her garden, to the beds of
spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.*

When Z laughs, she means it. Her howls soar high above man-made rafters and peal more sweetly than church bells. Tolling ancient female pleasures. "I am here. I am still here. You can't kill me. But your guilt worries me still . . ."

When Z yells, she roars. The winds of lamentation gather at her soft mouth. She "commands me with truth more terrible than an army of banners." Her blue eyes pale into pain. She moans of Matricide and of Amazons, caged. Of rape and of Motherless daughters. Of women's cowardice and of the persecution of wise and rebellious women.

*"Oh my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, let me see
thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy
voice, and thy countenance is comely."*

When Z reads the cards or priestesses a ritual, she is like this book: sacred and accessible, fiercely political and endearingly personal.

The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries is every woman's Spiritual Survival Guide. It is filled with Mother Goddesses, Sacred Sons, Amazons, and tortured witches. It is also a "cookbook" filled with useful recipes: how to form a coven, how to use herbs and candles, how to cast a spell, how to eat well. All within a radical feminist context.

FOREWORD

There is no other Body of Information presented and interpreted in this way anywhere. It is our heritage, passed down by Z to each of us, a family heirloom.

"Thy navel is like a goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies."

Z says women must bless and love themselves. Without this, they cannot love their sisters or their leaders—which we must do, or die as slaves. She says self-love is where liberation begins and Honor the High Priestess—although here Z is not talking about "adoring one leader and ignoring others." In [Z's] "personal experience nobody is getting kissed on her silk slippers like the male gurus are."

For women to imagine and honor a female deity is a sign of mental health. How sane can we be if we honor God as a tall white male—we who are relatively short, mortal, female, and of many colors. Imagine if women understood that Mary is not a virgin (in the Christian sense) and that she has a daughter, not a son. Listen to Z: "A self-created god who has no mother is a totally unsupportable concept." To deny motherhood is to deny women, and there are two kinds of people: mothers and their children.

"Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely; thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks. The roof of thy mouth like the best wine that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak."

Women are spiritually starving. Psychoanalysis, a job, a lover, a "career," a political support group, a patriarchal religion—none alone, all together are not sufficient to strengthen us or to "cure" us of the indifference, hostility, betrayal, and violation that is our daily fare.

Z's rituals will strengthen and heal us. For example, instead of being shamed, terrified, and even slapped when we menstruate for the first time, how about a pagan ritual for first menstruation? for menopause? Instead of doing a nose-dive into isolated new-born motherhood, how about a ritual to welcome the new mother into the circle of mothers? These rituals, and many more, are found in both volumes of *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*.

Z describes rituals for naming new-born children, for healing ourselves after surgery, after a miscarriage or an abortion, and for finding a home, a job, a lover. Perhaps she is at her best in describing attitudes in the craft toward Death. How to die, how to feast and bury the dead, how to be reborn. Here Z is stately, sure-footed, and sacred.

I love her more serious spells: how to hex a rapist, to free political prisoners, to regain psychic balance after rape, and weatherwork.

"The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved."

Feminists in conflict or at a grim standstill should pay attention to craft ethics: "Do as thou wilt and harm none"; "Don't think you're omnipotent, don't waste time in self-importance, guilt, or paranoia, and maintain a sense of humor"; "Don't throw a spell in anger"; "Build up the inner temple [the body], which is portable and all we have"; "Do no evil—but act in self-defense and self-affirmation"; "A witch bows to no man."

"My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bore her. The daughters saw her and blessed her."

Z of the dashing phrase, the silvery laugh, the unmistakable eyes of the Sibyl. Where do you come from?

From Budapest. From your mother Masika's womb. (Gypsy-steppes, a lone wolf, women's precise embroidery.) Before that: from emerald-shimmering Atlantis. Always, from your own strong will, spring into being. Against the odds. As usual.

Z: I remember us walking in 1976, bathed in Santa Monica pastels, talking about your being arrested for "fortune telling" in California. In California! where the weirdest of patriarchal sects and churches are tax exempt . . .

I knew then how very witchy you really are.

"Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is as strong as death. Jealousy is cruel as the grave."

"Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it."

Introduction: The Story of *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries,*

VOLUMES I and 2

ONCE UPON A TIME, somewhere in Virginia, there were two ex-nuns, Laura and Beach, who embarked on the adventure of following the path of the Goddess with a precious and rare copy of a book in their hands. This book was called *The Feminist Book of Light and Shadows*.

They also had with them a basket filled with candles and food to share and Peppy, their trusted mutt. And so they set out in the middle of the night on Halloween. It was windy. Beach was reading avidly about the ritual for Halloween by using a flashlight, when a gust of wind dislodged the book from her hand and carried it triumphantly toward the nearby woods where they were headed.

Laura dropped the basket of food and candles immediately and began to chase the airborne copy wildly, but to no avail. For a moment, Beach thought God the man was getting even with them for heresy. Laura thought the Goddess took the book ahead of them as a sign for their new-found faith. But Peppy, the dog, was delighted with the chase, which she punctuated with wild barks and gruffs at the ever-flying winged book of women's worship. All three of them breathlessly pursued the book that flew and flew with such ease, each woman in her own way caught up in the night's excitement.

Finally, at the woods, a birch tree snatched the book out of the winds and dropped it on the wet autumn grass. Peppy immediately snatched it up in her mouth and brandished it between her teeth. This was the last copy in the world of *The Feminist Book of Light and Shadows*.

I'm telling you this story because these two women were instrumental in our continuing to publish *The Feminist Book of Light and Shadows*, which later became *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*, Volumes I and II. They wrote us a letter in such vivid detail that we realized the hunger for the books was greater than we thought. We had to raise more funds and turn the pamphlet-form book into a more permanent form and keep it in print.

The Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1 was just an experiment at that time, started in the winter of 1971 on Winter Solstice with just a handful of friends, which later grew into a fluctuating group of between twenty and one hundred and twenty women. We were meeting in California every Sabbath, which were the solstices and equinoxes and the high points in between, and every full moon, which is, of course, thirteen times a year. This was a vigorous pagan practice of observing twenty-one major holidays during the year. What we put down on paper was pretty well what we did on the mountains in Malibu. However, by the time we wrote it down, we had already changed one practice, so we kept telling people very emphatically not to just slavishly follow the patterns we suggested but to improvise themselves, internalize the patterns, and then make up what suited them best.

Our group used to meet on Sundays in Malibu at Mama's Cafe. The core group included about eight of us, and I'd like to thank each of them—those who came and practiced with us and those who helped create *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*. Janet Roslund, of course, was the most instrumental in holding us together with her seriousness as an organizer and her bursts of mediumship. She channeled the Goddess as the Dean of the College. Of course, the college was the universe. She would close her eyes and her voice would come from her mouth—much higher than natural, almost prim. "Now girls," she would say, "you must learn all of the curriculum here at the college: the herbs on my back, the trees in my hair, my nature which is yours. And we want no tardiness in attention. Graduation is close."

Janet also found a reference written by Florence Nightingale, whom we all admired. She posed a very potent question: "Do you think it is possible for there to be a religion whose essence is common sense?" This question prompted us to respond to her across time and say, "Yes, the earth religions are such that the essence, the dogma, so to speak, is common sense that glorifies practical things, the improvement of our lives right now and not later, after death, which is absurd."

In Malibu, we sat around a weatherbeaten old table outside Mama's Cafe eating our eggs and potatoes, drinking coffee, talking and fantasizing and laughing, and knowing that we were new and we were doing something revolutionary, and we were going to affect the world around us. However, we didn't know to just what great effect. The sun was beating down on our backs and we were scribbling our notes. And so *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries* was born after many such meetings, contributions, suggestions, stimulation, nourishment, and a lot of bacon and eggs at Mama's Cafe.

I'd like to thank Nina Ramona, who always prayed for the oppressed countries around the world in the circles. She would always make us remember what a special place we lived in and how we had a responsibility to the rest of the world.

Another afternoon I was having a talk with Joan, who never failed to inspire me. She was grilling me. "What about this witchcraft religion?" she asked. "What is it that we believe in? What is it, Z?" She always had a great effect on me, and I realized I'd never really pulled it all together before: feminist witches—what is it we believe in that is different from the regular pagan community? Why are we new? And I just sat down and channeled the manifesto of the Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1, right on the edge of 1972, reflecting all of our moods and times. As I'm reading it today, fourteen years later, I'm amazed. The only thing that I would change—and we have changed—is the part about men. We do work with men now in the '80s. The men are changing rapidly, thank heaven. We recognize this historical fact. However, the feminist movement is still alive and many men work for it now and many more will in the future. The work with men is usually done in workshops—men's mysteries. Dianic circles are still for women only.

Around this same weather-beaten wooden table, there was a great debate: "What do we mean by 'Dianic'? What is it? What does this tradition mean for women?" We decided that it is not the worship of Diana only. Diana is a European name for the Goddess of the Moon. Her name means "Holy Mother," and we loved the name. Many rivers, like the Danube, are named after her, as are several other natural areas. However, we as women relate to all of the great goddesses that we can learn about.

Dianic tradition is therefore a women-centered, female-only worship of women's mysteries, but is not confined to the worship or reverence to the goddess Diana alone. We relate to the global Goddess as she was worshipped by all ethnic groups around the world. She is more like the Goddess of the 10,000 Names, but each time we talk about the Goddess, what we really mean is Life—life on this earth. We always recognize, when we say "Goddess," that she is the life-giver, the life-sustainer. She is Mother Nature.

Valerie, who was teaching assertiveness workshops and prosperity consciousness, always encouraged us to make the book more action-oriented, political and personal together. We tried to do this in the tone of the book and in its direction.

Live Oakwoman came to us from Colorado. She represented another natural priestess coming from a black woman's tradition, who found it compatible and nurturing to be within the Dianic tradition. She contributed the experiences that she had in the desert

while she was studying with Native Americans in *The Holy Book*, Part II.

Annu was sitting around the table, too. She was a partner in the Feminist Wicca candle shop, which the coven also ran. She was the strangest of all the witches because her nose was dead. She could not really distinguish between rosemary or cinnamon or vanilla. Her contribution is in Part II about dreams, where her nose didn't matter but her inner self was quite clear and she could distinguish between images quite well. Her contribution was giving us steadiness and keeping the books at the Feminist Wicca in order. Essentially the candle shop moved back into her house, where she is still running it as a mail-order business.

Anna Kria, a tall, queen-like lady, was our astrologist. She turned us on to star-gazing astrology, otherwise known as sidereal astrology. She turned us around, made us look at the stars with new eyes, new interpretations, and see it more as a precise science and not merely legends and lores passed down since Babylon.

Noel Brennan, who contributed to *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*, Part II, was a soul sister we didn't meet. Only through the mail did we receive her correspondence, her poems, her spells, her practices. We recognized her as a great soul. Finally, in 1985, I met her and found her everything I thought she was going to be—a sacred poet, a devoted priestess.

Cris Carol also contributed to Part II. I initiated her in 1978 at Beltane, but by then she was conducting her own circles in Portland and had organized the Changing Women Chorus, a Goddess Chorus, as well. Her contributions to the Songs of Amergin are very moving, especially when you hear them. There is a tape that exists with the Changing Women Chorus singing all those verses.

One day, Starhawk was driving down Lincoln Boulevard, just thinking about why feminism and witchcraft haven't found each other yet. Just as she thought this, she drove past the Feminist Wicca and the name caught her eye. She stopped the car and came into our candle shop for the first time. I happened to be staffing at that time, and I told her about the Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1 and invited her to a Spring Equinox Festival we were going to have. Starhawk attended her first ritual with us, and the impact on her life was one of the most glorious proofs why we should never close circles to anyone who is new. She became a great teacher and priestess quickly. She educated herself in different traditions, and is now contributing to the literature of the Goddess religion. I included her piece about the real dangers of magic in *The Holy Book*, Part II, because it was so needed and it showed Starhawk's approach, always looking through everything with humor.

Helen Beardwoman typed and edited the first edition of *The Holy Book*, Part I. She served as the Maiden Artemis in the coven. She was there when the police arrested us for the first time on the mountain top for candle-burning and trespassing. We found out that the land we were trespassing on was owned by Iran. This infuriated us. We did not feel as though Iran had any business owning this beautiful place of power, and we, as California women, felt being thrown off this land was most unjust. It was an absurd night. Over a hundred candles were burning in fireproof containers, because in our practices we usually lit two candles for each woman; there were about thirty-eight of us. We generally lit a candle inside the circle and outside the circle. Below us, the Malibu rich lived, with their kidney-shaped swimming pools. One of them closest to the mountain called the police, saying that there were strange cars parked outside. Just parking "strange cars" in Malibu was enough to mobilize eight police cars armed with rifles. They came for us over the fire roads, because this place was hard to approach, and we'd climbed the mountain to get there. Five minutes before the police arrived, just when Nina Ramona was reading her list of purpose for her new high coven (this was a Candlemas), we heard a chorus of wolves or hyenas or coyotes howl at us from the mountain in great warning. It was so loud and so eerie that we stopped the ritual and listened. Women were looking to me for guidance. I had never heard anything like it. I thought that there might have been another coven, since it was Candlemas, worshipping somewhere else on the mountain, since I heard deeper, male voices mixed in with higher, female voices. However, the sound was one tapestry of solid sound, almost non-human, but yet with human elements. I went on with the ritual, ignoring the sound. Five minutes later the police arrived. I will never again ignore coyotes, wolves, or whoever else is howling on the mountain and disrupting my ritual; from now on I will take it as a warning. I advise you to do the same.

Helen Beardwoman took the rap when the police pointed their car lights on us and said, "Who is the leader of this group?" At that time, I was on probation for reading the tarot cards for an undercover policewoman, so I could not come out and say I was. Besides, we were not really into leaders and followers. We were learning from teachers, but we regarded each other as equals. Helen Beardwoman stepped out and said, "I am." Helen, at that time, sported a life-long beard. She was tortured during her childhood with electrolysis, trying to kill off her follicles and make her beardless like a girl. She looked like a girl all her life—beautiful, gentle, strong, but with a beard.

This was when we were all liberating ourselves from bras, corsets, and high heels. She decided to liberate herself from electrolysis and see just what she looked like as she was designed by Mother Nature. Her beard was not too visible, since it was very blond. However, the police were immediately fascinated by it. They questioned her about how she grew it, and did she take hormones, and was she a man. There was only one policewoman among them, and we all lined up, thirty-eight of us, to be arrested by her. It took awhile. My students who were attending this Candlemas ritual for their own initiation saw the pitfalls and the dangers of practicing the earth religions.

At the trial, which was another event later on, a sign said upon entering the courtroom: "No bare feet or bathing suits, please." Now, that's Malibu for you.

Our lawyer, who was part of the group and present at the arrest, made a very strong case about how there was no fire danger and how there was no posting of private property signs. Nowhere were there indications that we were not allowed on the land. It was not a state park with a curfew. It was wilderness. And we respected the wilderness. We took extensive pictures of our altar, and proved without a shadow of doubt that there was no fire danger.

However, all of this groundwork and preparation didn't interest either the judge or the prosecuting attorney. All they kept talking about was Helen's beard, whether or not it was real, if she was man. It just fascinated them no end. Our case was pushed through like an afterthought, and we were fined thirty-eight dollars—a dollar apiece. This was our first experience with the Malibu police. There was a second time, but that was much later.

Mary Farkas contributed an article on nutrition for *The Holy Book*, Part II. She is a countrywoman of mine. I met her in Venice, California. She looked at what I ate—namely, Hungarian soul food—and said the following to me: "Listen, Z, if you continue eating our Hungarian cuisine, I'll tell you, in about a year or two, first you'll get a little neck pain and you're going to have shoulder pains, then a little back pain. Because what you're eating is a lot of fats from animals, and they're going to accumulate in your body and you're going to be stiff from it before your time."

As she was speaking to me, I realized that I already had small back pains and I already had small shoulder pains. In great fright, I said, "Oh, no—I already have them! What shall I do?" She and her lover came over and they cooked me a wholesome meal with barley and salad and for protein she trained me to eat more soya curds. It was very delicious, and she converted me to vegetarianism for the next ten years. (However, watch out for eating too much barley, because

that can put the pounds on you very quickly; or too much cheese to replace the meat. And essentially, don't eat a lot, was another thing I learned. When you are a vegetarian, just eat smaller portions. Today, I do with a little chicken and I certainly eat all the seafood I can get my hands on, but I'm not eating red meat and avoid fatty foods.)

Mary Farkas then disappeared from my life. The last time I saw her was in Boston at the First Women's Spirituality Festival, but her impact on my life still lingers, and her impact on many women's lives is furthered by her work in *The Holy Book*, Part II.

Carol Christ and I met in New York when she and Naomi Goldenberg were just graduating from Yale Theology School. Carol invited me there for a talk and we found great sisterhood around the Goddess. They had a difficult time being in an all-male, God-oriented theology school, holding up the Goddess flag, so to speak, and we helped each other to keep strong. Her contribution to the daily practices is very valuable. She herself was involved in teaching rituals at San Jose State, and she is now leading tours to Anatolia (Turkey) and Lesbos (Greece) to perform rituals in ancient Goddess temples around the Mediterranean area.

My most beloved contributor to *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries* was my mother, Masika Szilagyi, who passed away in 1979. I consulted a psychic about her and wanted to know what she's been up to (doctors don't cure their own children and psychics have to go to other psychics to talk to their psychic relatives). This psychic located her and said, "Well, I don't know if it means anything to you, but I appear to see a soul that is making sculptures out of light and leads groups of people through the sculptures and they feel better when they come out at the other end."

I recognized my mother and said, "Yes, that's her. She's having shows again." Of course, when you're dead you don't have clay to work with, so Mother works with light. I'm sure it's a great challenge, working with the other grand artists on the aurora borealis—both ends of the globe. And she's employing herself helping other souls.

My mother had a large collection of folklore and items relating to Hungarian paganism. I inherited her love for the pre-Christian religions, the love for everybody else's pre-Christian religion, not just the Hungarians', and my pain of not being able to talk to her is fierce and deep and will never be appeased.

I'm very much a Persephone type. I feel I manifest that goddess, and my yearning for my mother, Demeter, is great, she of the clay, she of the earth. I believe she is waiting for me when I die, and will help me cross the space between life and death. Before her death, my mother sent me her *Book of Sorrows*, *Book of Spells*, and I translated it

into English. This was one of the last collaborations we managed to bring about. Her beautiful art, which is included in both *Holy Books*, Parts I and II, is all in my house in Budapest on the second floor. She was promised a permanent museum by the government, but somehow it never materialized. So her pieces are waiting for a home. Right now my stepfather is dusting them off every day and trying to keep them in shape.

Many of the line drawings that you see in Part II, around the shaman poetry and later on in the book, are actually shaman drawings that I found in a book published in Hungary called *Let the Shaman Drums Play*. Since there is no copyright acknowledgment between the West and the East, they freely translate from us and I freely listed the art.

There were local artists who contributed. Carol Clement drew the sacred wheel with the Sabbaths on it, and Roni Wickware drew the goddess Diana and choreographed the poem of invocation to her. Micky Jackson did quite a few drawings for Part I. Each of these women added beauty and humor to the book.

Many people ask me why I use the word "witch" so often in the book; why is it that I'm not calling it "Womanspirit" or "Goddess's Inner Guide"? Safe words, new-ageish words that don't threaten anybody. My answer to that was and still is, I like the word witch. That is the only word in the English language that denotes woman with spiritual power. I know that Hollywood propaganda, Christian propaganda, has made people think that witches are only evil. In certain countries, the word witch means only evil.

Even in Hungary, the word *boszorkany* means somebody who can hex. The word in German, *hexe*, is again a negative word. We find the spiritual woman relegated to the realm of the negative, but that doesn't mean you cannot reclaim that word. So every Halloween, the media calls me up and wants to know what the witches are up to and why we call ourselves witches. I explain to them that this word means priestess and it has suffered a great deal of bad mouthing, bad propaganda, and we are aiming to reclaim dignity for witches and educate the world about it. If you insist on educating about a word, it takes about twenty years, but you can do it. Look what happened to the word *woman*.

When we began the Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1, I remember the group used to watch the Olympics. The announcer would come on and say, "Well, the girls are doing real good in swimming," and then these women appeared, who were well over twelve years old, and they were nothing like girls at all. We wrote strident letters to the commentators and we demanded that women be called women, since they didn't call the men boys. Eventually, the men changed,

because the women changed in their attitudes, and today we have women's events.

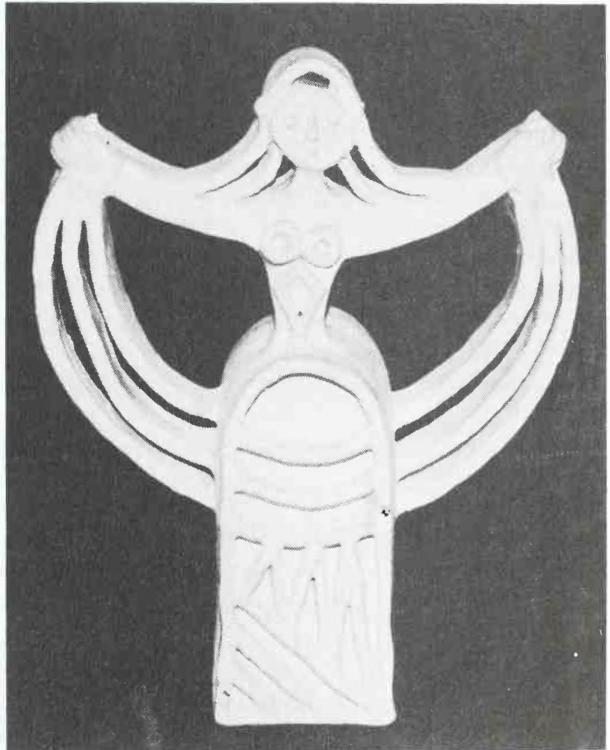
Also, what happened to the words chicks and broads? Remember those words? We just got rid of them, that's what happened. Language is a living tool and in the English language it's particularly important that we are conscious of how we use words. When we are calling for help, don't say, "Oh, my God," say, "Oh, my Goddess." That rolls just as naturally off your lips eventually, if you do it often enough, as "Oh, my God" did. It's just habit. If you start using these expressions around your friends, they soon pick them up unconsciously and they also begin to talk differently.

The last question that I always get asked is why we named our group Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1. "Don't we know," they ask, "that Susan B. Anthony, first of all, was a Quaker, and second of all, had nothing to do with witches?" (By the way, her best friend, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, was the spiritual forerunner who spent ten years of her life reclaiming women's spirituality. She disclaimed the validity of the Bible by proving that it was written by clerks and therefore was not the word of God but a political tool to keep women in their places.) So why do we say Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1? We chose her name because Susan B. Anthony was a suffragist whom we all respected. She had her limitations; she was not perfect. And neither are we. Susan B. Anthony also, during her lifetime, attended a fundraiser for Victoria Woodhall, who was a well-known psychic and the first woman to run for the presidency. This fundraiser took place in New York and a reporter spotted Susan in the corner. She was not having any drinks because she didn't drink; she also didn't like Victoria Woodhall. She was just there because she wanted to support this outrageous act of running for president since she was working for the vote for women.

The reporter taunted Susan B. Anthony and asked, "Well, Susan B. Anthony, what are you going to do in the afterlife?" Susan was sizzling by then, and she turned to the reporter and said, "Well, I tell you, when I die I shall go neither to heaven nor to hell but stay right here and finish the women's revolution."

As witches, we need a guardian spirit, someone who is devoted to the same cause that we are. When I came across this report in the newspapers, I said, "Susan B. Anthony, we've got a job for you. You'll be our Lady of the Coven. You shall be leading us in a political/spiritual way." And that's what's been happening ever since. We have never regretted taking on her name, and I think by now she's reconciled to the fact that her spirit is called upon by women's circles all over the world.

Feminist Witchcraft



Politics of Wimmin's Religion

Manifesto of the Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1

We believe that feminist witches are wimmin who search within themselves for the female principle of the universe and who relate as daughters to the Creatrix.

We believe that, just as it is time to fight for the right to control our bodies, it is also time to fight for our sweet woman souls.

We believe that in order to fight and win a revolution that will stretch for generations into the future, we must find reliable ways to replenish our energies. We believe that without a secure grounding in wimmin's spiritual strength there will be no victory for us.

We believe that we are part of a changing universal consciousness that has long been feared and prophesied by the patriarchs.

We believe that Goddess-consciousness gave humanity a workable, long-lasting, peaceful period during which Earth was treated as Mother and wimmin were treated as Her priestesses.

We believe that wimmin lost supremacy through the aggressions of males who were exiled from the matriarchies and formed the patriarchal hordes responsible for the invention of rape and the subjugation of wimmin.

We believe that female control of the death principle yields human evolution.

We are committed to living life lovingly toward ourselves and our sisters. We are committed to joy, self-love, and life affirmation.

We are committed to winning, to surviving, to struggling against patriarchal oppression.

We are committed to defending our interests and those of our sisters through the knowledge of witchcraft: to blessing, to cursing, to healing, and to binding with power rooted in woman-identified wisdom.

We are opposed to attacking the innocent.

We are equally committed to political, communal, and personal solutions.

We are committed to teaching wimmin how to organize themselves as witches and to sharing our traditions with wimmin.

We are opposed to teaching our magic and our craft to men until the equality of the sexes is a reality. We teach "Pan" workshops today and work together with men who have changed themselves into brothers.

Our immediate goal is to congregate with each other according to our ancient woman-made laws and to remember our past, renew our powers, and affirm our Goddess of the Ten Thousand Names.

Wimmin's Religion, As in Heaven, So on Earth

What people believe (faith-religion) is political because it influences their actions and because it is the vehicle by which a religion perpetuates a social system. Politics and religion are interdependent.

Every new social structure strives to come up with some kind of mythology of divine origin for its values and aims. The mythology is passed on for generations, and often its validity goes unquestioned for centuries. For example, a self-created male god who has no mother is a totally unsupportable concept. It is, to say the least, not supernatural, but merely unnatural. Nothing in nature parallels, let alone substantiates, such an absurdity. Everything, even a star, originates somewhere—every creature in the world has a mother force. Obviously, to deny motherhood is to deny wimmin.

Patriarchal religion is built on this denial, which is its only original thought, the rest of the edifice having been ripped off stone by stone from the Old Faith of Paganism. The Christian Trinity is a word-by-word reversal of the Fates, the Three-Fold Mother, the Three Graces. The Dove is the sacred bird of the Great Mother. The Great Mother was eventually incorporated into the new Christian religion in the form of the Virgin Mary, who is today worshipped in an "idolatrous" fashion in the Catholic church.

Who absorbs whose culture is a crucial issue on the cultural battlefield. Those who refused to accept this accommodation and continued to practice the ancient art were persecuted.

Wimmin's spirituality is rooted in Paganism, where wimmin's values are dominant. The Goddess worship, the core of Paganism, was once universal. Paganism is pleasure-oriented, joy and feasting prone, celebrating life with dancing and lovemaking. Working in harmony with Mother Nature, we discover and recover the All-Creatrix, the female power without whom nothing is born or glad.

Male energy pretends to have power by disclaiming the female force. Today, given the patriarchal society within which we live, witchcraft with a feminist politic (Dianic) says clearly that the real enemy is the internalized and externalized policing tool that keeps us in fear and psychic clutter.

The craft is not only a religion; it is also a lifestyle. In the time of the Matriarchies, the craft of wimmin was common knowledge. It was rich in information on how to live on this planet, on how to love and fight and stay healthy, and especially, on how to learn to learn. The remnants of that knowledge constitute the body of what we call "witchcraft" today. The massive remainder of that knowledge is buried within ourselves, in our deep minds, in our genes. In order to reclaim it, we have to open ourselves to psychic experiences in the safety of feminist witch covens.

A new kind of trust is the most important contribution that wimmin's spirituality has to give to the wimmin's movement. We learned we can trust our bodies when we learned we had the right to control them. We are learning we can trust our souls through learning that our right to have them is rooted in our recognition of the Goddess, of the female principle within the universe and ourselves.

It is from this source that our independence comes.

Herstory

Reprinted from Sister, February 1974

SPIRITUALITY IN HUMANS occurs from the earliest times, and some scientists call our species a religious animal as opposed to plain old animal.

Spirituality isn't necessarily religion. It can be a spontaneous communication with spirits around us, without any type of formalizing. But eventually formalizing occurs and then we've got religion.

Mythology is the mother of religions and grandmother of history. Mythology is humanmade by the artists, storytellers, entertainers of the times; in short, culture-makers are the soldiers of history, more effective than guns and bombers. Revolutions are really won in the cultural battlefields.

Women have understood this very well since we became aware of how women's culture had been ripped off by the ruling class. This resulted in a stunted self-image of women, which resulted in insecurities, internalizing the cultural expectations of us created by male culture-makers. Most of the women in the world still suffer from this spiritual poverty.

Neither was this reasoning unknown to the early patriarchs who gave us today's sexist society. Alexander the Great (the Pig) burned down the libraries that contained the sacred scrolls of the matriarchy, the maps, the astrological discoveries, the medicine, the entire know-how of the woman-oriented culture that went before him. He knew that this would stop the propagating of the ideas of woman's supremacy.

When the Greeks first started coming south to what we know as Greece, they too had to deal with the culture they found: high priestesses and Triple Goddess (Isis, Diana, and Hecate) temples, sacred shrines, and women in power.

For the first three hundred years, these pastoral tribes from the north were assimilated by the Triple Goddess culture, Hera (meaning courage), so much so that the Greeks gave up their notion of

"marriage" as indecent. Priestesses took over and evenly distributed their favors among all tribes at appropriate sowing times to ensure fertility of the barley, figs, and dates. The Greeks learned that this magic worked, and discarded their patriarchal ways. Their male god, whom they called Dios, was formally adopted by Hera as her son, and renamed Zeus after her real son Zagreus. It was all right until more of the same Greeks started to come down from the south side of the Danube, discovering to their horror that their cousins wore jewelry and sometimes women's clothing and were ruled by women. The effort of cultural warfare became at this point a very conscious campaign.

Sthenelus, the leader of the Achaeans, disavowed Zeus as the son and therefore subject to Rhea (Hera), the Triple Goddess, and declared that he had no mother!!! This was an important political move. He popped out of the sky all by himself; therefore, he was the Almighty Creator, with no dependency on Hera's or Rhea's motherhood for life.

A full-scale religious war ensued. On the goddess side, the high priestesses of Rhea and Athena were hung from an oak tree by their hair with anvils tied to their feet until they swore to accept Dios and not insist on the Supremacy of Rhea. However, the worship of the goddess was not discontinued for the sake of the harvest!

But this was not all. Sthenelus called for a conference to agree on and fix the new pantheon once and for all. These religious leaders gathered at Olympia to make up the Deities for the next hundreds of years to be worshipped by their offspring. Father Zeus became the Almighty ruler; Poseidon, who used to be a forest god, now with the vanishing forests had to be given a new territory, and he got the sea; and the thunder he used to wield was taken away from him and given to Zeus. He was married to Amphitrite, the mother goddess in her marine aspect, to make his rule stick.

The Triple Goddess, in her gracious character as nymph, could not be quite excluded, but they ripped off her ancient name *Marianae* and forced her into a "marriage" with the lame god Hephestus, the sooty-faced blacksmith god, and renamed her Aphrodite (foam born). The Triple Goddess's very important aspect of the *maid* also had to be included in response to public demand. After some dispute, she was admitted into the new patriarchal family as Artemis of the New Moon, the huntress of the wild. This was the correct name she bore among the Palasgians.

But there was a rub. The new Artemis was reborn as the twin of Apollo (who used to be a mouse god) to elevate him into some glory by association. The patriarchs needed all the glamor they could steal. This concession didn't satisfy the Boeotians and Athenians, on

whose affections the Maiden Goddess had a very powerful hold. They demanded Athena be included in a seat of importance. After long and drawn-out meetings, it was decided that she could be included with her own name as Athena only if she also suffered rebirth, denounced her mother, Rhea, and was born from the head of Zeus as a fully formed maiden in armor.

In the question of the Underworld, a traditional realm of the Triple Goddess, Hecate, the patriarchs really went wild. This was the muscle of the matriarchy. The goddess of Death could be invoked to plot against the new-fangled gods of Olympus with considerable danger, so they abolished her. This caused a big public outcry, and since the name of the game was "who shall absorb whose culture," the patriarchs included Persephone as the wife of Hades, brother of Zeus. Her marriage was acknowledged by the bereaved Palasgians as nothing less than rape. And so the stage was set for a sexist society. The entire Western world lifted the values and male domination structure from the Greek model.

Mythmakers, poets, singers, and artists from then on went about talking about these new deities, with stories about the rapes of Zeus, as he populated the pantheon with semigods, offspring of his clandestine affairs with mortal women, since Hera, who now was also forced into this new institution called "marriage" with him, would not give him any children except Hephestus. And we call these works of art classical knowledge, classical arts, and revere them. What a pity!

I concentrated on the Greek story because it's the most influential culture on our own society. But they were not the only ones who made the change-over from Mother Goddess worship to denial of motherhood. As a tool for upsetting female lineage and female inheritance, the Egyptians also made up their own cockeyed stories about Re, the sun god, and deposed Hathor, the mother of all life—symbolized by the white cow—and Isis of the thousand breasts, mother-lover of Osiris, who was a regular god who died yearly and was resurrected.

In Sumer, where the matriarchies were most ancient and successful, mythology was changed with the help of new myth-makers from Nammu, the sea goddess, to Enlil, a kind of male grandchild of hers, concentrating mythology around the male figure. In Babylon, where the patriarchy was at full blast, stories were circulated that Marduk brought forth the entire Universe, and represented Order (Law and Order isn't new either), and Tiamat, the Triple Goddess, was made to represent Chaos. Marduk chopped up his mother's body and made the world out of her limbs. What a grisly mother-hating myth this is. Shades of Jack the Ripper.

Christianity is rather naive compared with the earlier patriarchal yarns. Eve (whose name means Havla, *life*), doubtless the goddess in her mother form, eats from the apple tree! This is most absurd, since the apple or quince always belonged to *her* and symbolized *Wisdom*. The fact that the *snake* made her do it is transparent as well. The snake belongs to her; it is the death and rebirth symbol of the goddess. At her shrines, the sacred snakes used to be consulted by the priestesses for oracles. Hecate, Mary, Medusa, and Eve—they are never without their sacred animal, the snake. Just as Life is never without Death as a necessity.

Such is the power of mythology. It fixes the society that the ruling class wants perpetuated. That's why, dear sisters, we must get on with our own mythmaking. I propose a story, ancient in its roots, but not often repeated nowadays, except at witches' festivals, where the Mother Goddess is dispensing Psychic Energy, in this energy-crisis-ridden world, to her daughters, who turn to her.

The Great Goddess is stirring again in the hearts of Her daughters. Thousands of wicca covens exist today, and the spiritual poverty of the male culture turns off more and more women. Church women are revolting, demanding to be ordained, and individual women are discovering the magic their womanhood gives them if they only listen to the Goddess's instructions.

I feel, as a revolutionary, that the women's movement is badly in need of just such an energizing. To reclaim our souls is the next step in achieving the goals of the movement, after taking back our bodies.

We now have to turn the very weapons of culture-making that defeated us gradually, against our oppressors.

The Slothwoman as Ancient Magician

*Reprinted from Thesmophoria,
Spring Equinox, 1986*

MY FRIEND CARLA didn't believe in anything, not god or goddess or spirits; she even doubted that she had a soul herself. One day, Carla had to face a great challenge. She fell in love.

Since this was not something she had done often in her life, something inside her wanted reassurance, wanted some protection against the affair falling apart. On that day she called me up.

"Can you do a protection spell on me, Z?" she asked.

"I don't do spells for others," I said. "It's not empowering if I do it for you."

"I'll give you money."

"Carla, that isn't the point. I don't do spells for you or anybody—unless you want to learn how, in which case I'll be happy to teach you."

"But you know, Z, I'm not a believer," she said. "My spell wouldn't work."

"Your spell will work fine even if you don't believe in it. Witchcraft is not a matter of faith, it is a matter of observation. We work with natural laws. If you think the sun won't rise or the moon won't shine, they still do whatever they're supposed to do in the universe, regardless of what you believe. But since this love affair is close to your heart, your emotional investment far outranks mine, so it's your work that's needed," I explained.

"Whatever you say. Teach me then," Carla finally agreed.

I listened to her problem, which was simply about this man who didn't want to be tied down with a lover. In other words, he just wanted sex, but not to be tangled up with the care and emotions that come with a committed relationship.

She performed a spell called "lover come near," using two cherry red candles, with each candle bearing their name. Under the full moon, I told her to walk up a mountain and burn these two candles to the goddess and ask her to blend these two hearts into one. Placing the candles on the ground, she had to move them closer and closer together until they touched and burned down together.

The spell worked within two weeks.

The reluctant lover came to see her more and more often, blending their energies together, making commitments, and they finally relaxed with each other.

There are many ways to get interested in magic, but falling in love seems to be the biggest recruiter for the goddess.

Still, how did she do it? A woman who had no preparation, who just followed a spell like a recipe?

My theory is that deep within ourselves, there lives a creature I call Slothwoman (or Slothman). She is our ancestral brain that is the repository for all our racial memories, that controls healing; a sturdy creature, to be sure, but speechless. She is into the elements, this brain: fire, water, and earth. She controls our instinctive behavior. Our sex life would be boring without her help, and generally she is that which we deny in ourselves in this modern life.

In order to impress our Slothwoman, we have to do tricks, like making up little rhymes, easy ones she can rock to back and forth, and make a pretty little altar that she would be turned on by. We use candles and incense to fascinate her within—use magic, which is her language, her form.

This sweet gentle giant is the key to our lives; she is body, health, sex, instinct, creativity, and love. She wants security from us. She wants to be regarded. She wants to be called forth. Otherwise, she can sleep through our modern lives and do nothing. She is Slothwoman, ancestor.

I even visualize her as a tall, hairy, ungainly creature, my Slothwoman. She lumbers as she walks. She is clumsy. She howls at the moon and hums when happy. She likes food and cooking smells, the company of others, and family kinds of gatherings. If I take care of her, she lets me have all I need to maintain myself body and soul. If you can turn on this ancient brain within, you can turn on the magic.

I think it's natural to look at spellcasting as a process much like cooking; you use a cookbook and follow the steps. It isn't the tools that make the magic come to pass, it is our own brain. Intellect, however, is not this magical brain. Imagination, the dark night, the full moon, wild environments, woods, mountains, rivers, oceans—these are the places where the Slothwoman comes alive.

Faith healing works the same way. You create a situation where the priestess gets access to your old brain, a circle of friends builds a giant fire, makes sounds with rattles and drums, opening yourself up to the healer's words.

Then, when the energy is quite high, an experienced priestess would know when she can command the evil spirit (a.k.a. sickness) to leave the body. Our brain is so powerful that if you can make her reject the sickness, she can lower fevers, she can get up and walk even if she was at death's door.

The same is true with this brain if she chooses to die. Suppose this part of our brain feels "hexed." Slothwoman hates that. She may not even want to get up in the morning. In Tahiti, there were priests who would hex an individual and no Western doctor could cure him. The only cure was to have the hex removed by the person who put it on him.

Our old brains are gullible, cannot be "hip." No amount of consciousness raising can help. This brain doesn't have the power of speech. It only understands the old moves, rituals, rhymes, fire, water, stars. Out of these elements only can a cure be constructed. Speeches and psychologists are meaningless.

It is important to keep communicating to our own inner Slothwoman. If you are a friend to her, she is less fearful, less gullible. If you provide her with the appropriate rituals she is satisfied and will provide you with robust health, a lusty sex drive, and a love of life. Slothwoman, however, is not the one who gets up each morning to go out and get a paycheck. That's our new brain, devoted to speech and the opposing thumb.

Scientists say we only use 10 percent of our brain power; the rest must be cultivated by design. In nature, that which you don't use, you lose.

Spellcasting is what praying is today in other religions. To cast a spell on a mountain means to pray for something. In the Craft, we pray to an imminent goddess; she permeates all walks of life, within and without us. We do not just pray to her "above" but also "within." When patriarchal religions talk about the "grace" that comes to those who pray, they are talking about the same things we did thousands of years before them.

Cultivate your deeper mind and be well.

Tools of the Craft— Material

Altar: It represents the deep mind. No one else is allowed to touch your private altar, not even lovers or relatives. Sabbath altars, on the other hand, are built by all participating.

Setup: A table covered with a clean white cloth and a Mother Goddess image in the middle (a single rose, pictures, even postcards are used to represent the Goddess). It is not the image that we worship. Witches are not fetish worshippers. We use the image to awaken in our deep minds the Triple Goddess who rules over life and death and beauty. On two sides there are two white candles. In front of the image, there is a censer or incense burner. A shell makes a nice burner. Magical work takes place in front of this setup, be it black or white magic.

Athame: A knife, preferably black-handled, with a blade that can be magnetized. It represents the element air, and is used to separate the sacred grounds from the rest by casting the circle.

Wand: It represents the fire element. Place it to the south on your altar. It is used in love magic, and can also be used to cast circles. The magic wand does will-power work.

Cord: The cord is made to measure, wrought to bind. It is used to cast the nine-foot radius circle for ritual work.

Chalice: It represents the water element and the grail. It is the Goddess symbol of plenty and blessings.

Pentagram: It represents the five-fold path. It is the ancient sign of protection. It also stands for earth.

How to Make Your Tools

It is best to make all your tools from scratch. If that is impractical, try to invest as much energy in them as possible. When you buy them, never haggle over the price.

Athame: Take magnets and stroke the knife toward yourself until it is magnetized. Strengthen the magnetization at each new moon.

Wand: A branch, from a special tree you love, as long as the distance from elbow to third fingertip, taken under a full moon, which you pay for with one drop of your blood. There are thirteen sacred trees, any of which is great for wands. Most often used are: rowan, oak, elder, willow, blackthorn, hazel, mistletoe, and elderberry. Dig out a little hole in one end of the branch and stuff it with a piece of cotton and a drop of your menstrual blood. Seal with candlewax drippings. Put your witch's name in runes upon the opposite side of the wand and a pentagram at the top and bottom. Consecrate it in the name of Diana with water, wine, fire, incense, and oil at new moon time.

Biolline: White-handled knife to carve with.

Cauldron: Iron pot to burn your herbs in or cook meals for feasts in.

Cord: Red yarn, braided into a nine-foot long girdle worn around the waist.

Necklaces, rings, and jewels are all used according to inclination. Seeds, such as acorns, shells, and stones, traditionally were used to make necklaces, which stand for the "circle of rebirth."

Candles, Oils, and Incense

Candles, oils, and incense are three important tools in the practice of magic. The flickering of candlelight and the aroma of burning incense awaken and stimulate the deep mind, which is the source of the power we work with in doing spells. It is the ancient part of us that knows no language, that communicates through instinct and intuition.

Candles

Candles represent the fire element, which is associated with the south. They are used to mark that corner of the universe, both on your altar and in your circle. A candle's color is important because we naturally ascribe different meanings to different colors:

Attraction:	Yellow and orange
Concentration:	Purple and white
Dispelling (blessed):	Black
Happiness:	Blue, orange, and pink
Holidays:	White
Friendship:	Blue
Influence:	Brown and pink
Love:	Pink and red

Novena:	Nine-day candle
Prosperity:	Red or green
Peace:	White
Protection:	Reversible (Black with red center)
Revenge:	Reversible (Black snake with red center)
Special devotion or supplication:	Nine devotional candles
Special spiritual message and readings:	Red and white
Special favors:	Brown
Success:	Triple action (Red, white, and blue)
To pray for the sick:	White
Work:	Purple
Improve vibration:	White and pink

Candles are also designated by color to the months of the year:

January:	Red and gold
February:	Yellow and blue
March:	Blue and green
April:	Pink and orange
May:	Blue and gold
June:	Red and blue
July:	Red and green
August:	Pink and orange
September:	Pink and gold
October:	Pink and gold
November:	Yellow and blue
December:	Red and orange

The month you were born determines your astral colors. Choose astral candles to represent yourself (or others) in your spell.

Image Candles

Image candles can be used in a spell by themselves, or they can be used along with regular candles.

Black Cat: To stop slander and gossip.

Green Female or Male Images: For money, anoint with Money Oil during waxing moon. Burn a little each morning and night.

Red Female or Male Images: For love, anoint with Musk, Attraction, or Lover's Oil. Burn a little bit each morning and night.

Black Snake Reversible: To send back evil vibrations.

Black Snake: Against enemies; anoint with Black Art Oil and burn during waning moon.

Black Skull: To stop an attack on your mind.

Purple Skull: To influence the mind of others; anoint with Control Oil.

Grey Images: To cancel out bad luck; anoint with Uncrossing Oil for purification and health.

Red Snake: To burn away obstacles between lovers.

Yoni (the female genitals): Ancient symbol of freedom and rebirth; green for health and growth, red for love.

Candles should be anointed and blessed before they go on the altar. The appropriate oils to use are described below. To anoint your candle, pour the oil on your fingertips and stroke it upward from the center; then turn it around and stroke it upward again. Be sure to get the top and bottom and the wick. To bless the candles, lay them down all together and hold your hands over them, thumbs touching. Feel them all over with your bioplasma (not touching). Imagine your energy going into them. Breathe deeply a few times, and holding your hands over the candles, say:

*In the name of Isis of the thousand breasts,
may my purpose be blessed;
In the name of Diana, may my spell be strong;
In the name of Hecate, Queen of Heaven, Queen of Hell,
may my purpose be accomplished.*

Close your hands tightly around the candles, saying "So mote it be!" Here, as in all blessings, the spirit is the thing; improvise!

Oils

In addition to using oils to anoint candles, oils are the body's incense. Use them instead of perfume; they are more organic and they manipulate the aura by stimulating the deep mind.

Ava Rosa: To bind your enemy.

Bast: Sacred to the Sun Goddess. Used as a powerful good-luck vibe.

Bat's Blood: Breaks hexes. (It is an herb.)

Bewitching: Amplifies willpower. Use it only with clear purpose.

Black Art: Used in self-defense to zap. Sacred to Lilith.

Bergemont: Protection and money drawing.

Cleopatra: Heavy love vibration with control.

Cinnamon: Attracts lovers, good luck, health.

Come-Inside: To be visited often by great people.

Double-Crossing: For revenge.

Dove's Blood: An ink used to write commands on parchment paper.

Fast Luck: For special projects, gambling.

Forget Him/Her: If an affair is best forgotten.

High Joan: For sacred candles.

Lover's: Freshens up love affairs.

Money Drawing: Anoint your purse, candles.

Musk: Excites sexuality. For love spells.

Priestess: Ritual oil; anoint candles with it; furthers spirituality.

Protection: Wear it daily against danger on all levels.

Patchouli: Sacred to Pan.

Rosemary: Protection; wear it to battles.

Rose: Sacred to Diana.

Success: Wear it to make your goals come true.

Uncrossing: Wear it if bad luck strikes.

Violet: Sacred to the Fairy Queen.

War Water: For attack, used in spells with war powder.

Incense

Incense represents the air element, which is associated with the direction of the east, and is used to mark that corner of the universe in a ritual setup. The aromas of different incenses put different vibes in the air. Burning incense is a good way to control your psychic space. Powdered incense burns very well by pouring it into a cone-shaped pile in your censer and holding a match to it. The pebble-form incenses (Isis, frankincense) and the incenses that include herbal mixtures burn better on charcoal. See the section on Spell-casting for incense recipes.

Tools of the Craft— Psychic

THE NUMBER ONE TOOL that we have is imagination. Do you remember when you were a child, how you could populate an empty space with things and people, conversations; experience total transformations within by just imagining them? This childhood imagination is stifled during the school years. We are not allowed to fly with our thoughts, we are socialized.

I visited the place where I grew up and I saw the beloved backyard of our traditional Hungarian yellow building. I lived on the ground floor of a four-story apartment house. Of course, the yard was much smaller than I remembered it, but it was still there and it was just as dark. Many people tried to plant flowers there, but because of the shadow from the apartment house, nothing grew.

But I remember playing there with a red brick representing a train. I pushed it around on the ground for hours and hours on end, making little tracks. And I stopped in make-believe places, and I called them whatever I knew. For instance, I went to Africa and visited the jungles and saw the tigers and the elephants. Other times, the train stopped in Paris and I got out and I became a grown-up dame, shopping for clothes. I went to Australia in the backyard, watching the kangaroos hop around, catching them and playing with them. I remember the backyard transforming into a stage for ballet, where I was the prima donna and I danced for hours in front of a giant, roaring, applauding audience. Other times I went on quiet walks and transformed myself into birds and flying creatures. I battled dragons. I won battles and generally had a grand time. This is the precious faculty we use in magic; we use it in everyday life, we use it in creating our reality—our imagination.

The second tool is breath. When you sit in front of your altar, you become conscious of your breathing. You imagine your lungs becoming like wings and you fill them with air. You see, your being is connected to life through breath. When you gather with others, holding hands and breathing in unison, you become as one. It's very easy to unify with many people by just breathing together. Even if you are not doing the Craft with anyone, but if you gather around to

discuss an issue or have a meeting, it's a very good idea to hold hands and breathe together a little while before you begin. You will find people will be more focused, the work will get done faster, and people will be more friendly with each other. Then, at the end, close the meeting by breathing together.

The third tool is something I call "clear targeting." To find purpose is a gift. You have to work for it. It's not just "Oh, here it is. I'll pick it up and it's mine." If you think about attaining peace, you have to meditate on that, too. You have to meditate first before you can find the proper target. Whatever you do, you can always find a positive way to get to it, even if you are in great trouble.

The answer is not to smite your enemy to the death, because Mother Nature does not work like that. You are better off finding a positive way to attain what you need. Just meditate on your purpose. To find your purpose and for proper targeting, get yourself a sky-blue candle. The color blue is a relaxing color. It's easier to find answers (your purpose) when you are relaxed. Write your name on the candle three times and meditate on your purpose three nights in a row. Burn a little incense as well.

Basic Witchy Setup

BE IT FOR SABBATS, esbats, or private devotional rituals, the basic elements of the ritual are the same and follow the same sequence. The basic witchy setup is:

1. Determining the boundaries of the circle.
2. Consecrating the grounds with fire and air (incense), water, and salt.
3. Drawing the circle separating the grounds of worship.
4. Purifying those who enter the circle.
5. Closing the circle after all are admitted.
6. Invocations to the corners of the universe.
7. Sealing the circle.
8. Raising witches' power.
9. Inviting the Goddess.
10. Blessing on all tools, food, people.
11. Ritual work appropriate to the event.
12. Feasting; first thanks and libation to the Goddess, then personal business with the Goddess.
13. Dancing and "Pleasure Now!" celebration.
14. Dismissing the spirits.

Why Should a Woman Cast a Spell?

WHY NOT? Everything else has been done.

Casting a spell is a willful act, some say. It is interfering with the natural order of things. I say casting a spell is observing and participating as an equal partner in the natural order. A woman is part of the natural order. Her directed willpower is part of nature. I recognize the reluctance toward casting a spell. It is against every kind of social conditioning you have ever received. So, I advocate doing this; go ahead and scare yourself. It's good for you.

Casting a spell that is positive, in self-defense, or in self-interest is not selfish but positive, life affirming. You have given powers, the very same powers that devalue you in society. Your right-brain activity, your hunches, come in handy in this activity. Now is the time to use this very oppression, like Aikido, in your own favor. All your life as a woman you have been encouraged to be intuitive, sensitive, nurturing, and inventive. In spellcasting, that is all that is needed.

"But Z, what if it comes back to me tenfold?" Well, don't be a fool. Never use your magic to attack the innocent. Then you have nothing to fear. Always target wisely, finding a positive approach toward what you seek. Don't be frivolous or cowardly. If your course is righteous, and your tools ready, go to it. Women have enough trouble worrying about being powerless than to waste time worrying about a little power we can use right away. Did I say "little"?

Not at all. A lot of power. Women can call down nature in their own behalf. For example, we cast a spell for a custody case once. The father hired a very expensive lawyer and the trial date was only three days away. The mother gathered us in a circle and we raised energy around a sassafras tree, performed spontaneous prayers, chanted the names of the Goddess, and offered a small libation of milk to the Earth. Three days later, this woman called to say her husband and his lawyer set out for court and never arrived! She won by default. (We still don't know where they went instead.)

A young woman in Venice (California) came to us after her rape. She knew the man and wanted him prosecuted. We shared a hex with her to bring this man to justice so he could not weasel out from

punishment. She performed the hex, with our help, and buried the remnants in a nearby cemetery. The rapist was caught while eating in a greasy-spoon restaurant after raping someone else. The police put him away for all his crimes. He is still in jail.

In San Francisco, we performed a spell against the Briggs Initiative, which would have made it illegal for gays to teach. The initiative bit the dust.

The stories of success are endless and miraculous. Spells are powerful prayers and they do work. Practice your powers and you will never believe you're inferior ever again.

Casting the Circle

THE CASTING OF THE CIRCLE is crucial for any ritual work. The ritual work must correlate the correct planetary aspects with the purpose of the work.

Gather the sisters participating in the ritual and measure a circle by holding each other's hands and standing at arm's length. Mark the circle by gathering a stone to replace one's foot space. Gather more stones and build an altar in the middle of the circle, slightly to the north (power corner). Upon the stone altar, set your representation of the Mother Goddess; an image is fine, or a single rose. Place two white candles (one to the east, one to the west) of the Goddess image.

Each woman now places one white candle on the altar, and one on the outside circle stone.

Women are needed to do these tasks:

Mark out the circle with flour and barley, and write the names of the Goddess within the circle.

Consecrate the grounds with fire and air by walking around with incense in the circle (frankincense and myrrh is traditional; herbal incense is fine).

The High Priestess (HP) purifies all the grounds and herself with water and salt (or seawater, if it is available). Her priestesses leave the circle to meditate. The HP draws the circle with her witch's knife on the ground in an uninterrupted way, separating the grounds of worship from the rest. It is drawn from east to south to west to north, leaving a gate to the east open for the women to enter.

Women gather to enter, oldest first, youngest last.

The HP sprinkles purifying water on each one, saying:

I purify you from all anxiety, all fears, in the name of Diana.

Woman answers:

I enter the circle in perfect love and perfect trust.

HP kisses and embraces the woman:

Welcome to the Goddess's presence.

The priestess with incense consecrates each person with a pentagram in the air. Each woman attends then to lighting her candle on the altar and outer circle.

When the last woman has entered, the HP closes the gate with her knife and says:

This circle is closed. The Goddess blesses her women.

To unify: Form the circle with linked bodies, hands on napes of necks. Breathe deeply to oxygenize. Every woman makes a sound with her body that can manifest as a low hum, or goddess names, or just variations of the sound the group uses.

Backing the HP, the women turn to the east, drawing a pentagram in the air with their witches' knives.

HP walks to the east corner, drawing a pentagram in the air with her athame, kissing the blade after each invocation:

EAST: *Hail to thee, powers of the East! Hail to the great eagle, corner of all beginnings! Ea, Astarte, Aurora, Goddess of all Beginnings! Come and be witness to our rite as we perform it according to ancient rites!*

SOUTH: *Hail to thee, powers of the South! Corners of great fire and passion, Goddess Esmeralda, Goddess Vesta and Heartha! Come and be witness at our rite as we perform it according to ancient laws!*

WEST: *Hail to thee, powers of waters! Life-giving Goddess of the Sea, Aphrodite, Marianne, Themis, Tiamat! Come and guard our circle and bear witness to our rite as we perform it according to ancient rites!*

NORTH: *Hail to thee, corner of all powers! Great Demeter, Persephone, Kore, Ceres! Earth Mothers and Fates! Great sea of glass! Guard our circle and bear witness as we perform our rite according to your heritage.*

HP moves back to the east corner and seals the circle with her kiss. Now the circle is really closed, and nobody can leave it until the spirits evoked are properly thanked and dismissed.

The Ritual

All place their knives down. Arms are linked one more time—it's time to raise the witches' power. First a low hum is produced, but then creativity and imagination can be used to embroider on the

overall sound of everyone. Unusual sounds can come up, animal sounds, howling at the moon like dogs or hooting like owls.

While this is happening, the HP feels when the time is right (energy has been raised) and invites the Goddess's appearance. This part is always improvised, but there are ancient lines to memorize, if you are so inclined (see the Sabbats for details):

Blessing upon all tools, food, people.

All extend hands in the sign of the Horn (little finger and thumb extended, rest tucked under), never interrupting the hum, which is the energy to use throughout the ritual:

Gracious Goddess Diana! Eternal Sister! Bless this food to make us strong! Bless our tools, too, and hearts! We gather together to receive your teachings and draw near your presence!

All coveners say:

Blessed be!

HP pours the wine into the chalice, holding it up to the moon:

Lovely Goddess of the bow! Lovely Goddess of the arrows! Of all hounds and of all hunting. Thou who wakest in starry heaven when the sun is sunk in slumber. Thou with moon upon thy forehead, who the chase by night preferest unto hunting in the daylight, with thy nymphs unto the music of the horn—thyself the huntress, and most powerful: I pray thee think, although but for an instant, upon us who pray unto thee! Fair Goddess of the rainbow, of the stars and of the moon, the Queen most powerful of hunters and of the night. We beg of thee thy aid, that thou mayest give to us the best of fortune ever!

HP pours wine upon the earth as a libation and all coveners, when receiving the chalice, do the same. She sips of the wine and says, "Blessed be!" or gives us a short blessing, or whatever is close to the heart.

Practical Advice for Circling

In the two volumes, we gathered practices based on improvisation. So, rule number one is to improvise any time you feel as though creative juices are flowing. This is very important. Spontaneous praying is more powerful than learned, out-of-the-book praying.

What comes through the soul in the moment is more powerful than what is hammered into the brain.

When you memorize poetry, don't worry about forgetting a line or two. Recite them freely at the circles. Do not read them off the paper. Nothing can ruin high energy more than somebody whipping out a flashlight and starting to read a piece of poetry. Now, it's different when you are at the last part, the feast part of your circles, and you are settled down and there is free-flowing conversation. You can read your poetry then. Remember the earth's religions began before writing and the earth's religions invented writing.

Take some alone time and walk through rituals in natural places to find out what works for you. Try to worship outdoors as much as possible. Don't let yourself become too much of a backyard pagan or a livingroom witch. That's missing the point.

Indoor gatherings are more practical when the weather is cold and you intend to go sky-clad. Sky-clad means taking your clothes off, remembering that in the craft, the naked human body represents truth—the goddess Maat, for example, is always shown nude, with feathers only; and she's the goddess of truth. Remember that it is a great equalizer, not a sexual thing, to take your clothes off. It also teaches you love for your body, respect for your body, and acceptance of the variety around you.

Do not lend out your Holy Books to other people. They are notoriously disappearing from people's homes and possessions. Put your name on it right away, and if you have to lend it out or show it to anyone, write down to whom you lent it. I have seen people returning, buying new copies, because they lent them out and never got them back. Others say the books were just stolen. Now, that's a bad idea—to steal Holy Books from each other. There are enough copies for everyone, so please buy your own copy and don't lift it from others.

The Feast

The chalice goes around to each woman and they make a toast to the Goddess with libation. Thanks for received favors and praises for Her wisdom are in order. The second round of wine is used for sisters' wishes, a dialogue between Goddess and Woman. Communal and personal help might be asked here. All coveners listen intently to each woman's words and seal them with "Blessed be!" or "So mote it be!" Before the women grow tired of standing, the HP takes the bread or cakes, as the case may be, and offers them to Diana. It is then passed from woman to woman. All think about the

significance of the Moon as governor of waters and, therefore, organic life on Earth.

The feast is done in happy tones, much praise for the Goddess, and celebration of Her among us, Her women. All can then sit on the ground.

After the feast, dancing begins.

Ancient Meeting Dance

The circle of women holds hands and step in rhythm from the east toward the north. At one point, the HP whips around and, as she moves from north to east, she kisses each woman. The women follow and kiss each other likewise.

Dance music can be made with sacred instruments: cymbals, drums, flutes, tambourines. Recordings of women's music are fine. Partying and general merriment continue until energies are depleted.

Then the circle is formed one more time. The HP draws her pentagrams starting from the north moving toward the west, south, and east, as in the opening.

NORTH: Goddess Demeter, we thank you for your presence. Watchtowers of the North bless us before you leave! Blessed be!

WEST: Great Goddess of Life, watchers of the West, thank you for attending, please bless us before you leave! Blessed be!

SOUTH: Great Goddess of Fire and Passions, thank you for guarding us! Please bless us before you leave! Blessed be!

EAST: Great Goddess of All Beginnings, grant us our prayers! Thank you for attending! Please bless us before you leave.

After the last corner, the HP announces, "The ritual is ended. The Goddess blesses Her women."

Throughout the rituals, the coveners are always vocal. Each blessing is repeated by all. Each motion with athalme is followed by all. Each time the HP speaks, coveners back her up with their own improvised sound. When there are enough priestesses, rotate the corners of the universe so all can practice.

Introduction to Spellcasting

IN OUR DIANIC TRADITION, Aradia, the daughter of Diana, was sent down to the earth because "there were many poor, and the rich made slaves of the poor." In those days, as today, the slaves were cruelly treated. In every palace, tortured, in every castle, prisoners. Today it is just more sophisticated; the slaves are predominantly women, the places of imprisonment vary from split-level cells to tiger cages.

Aradia came to teach the oppressed how to overthrow the masters. As the only known female avatar (deity in human form), she established her school and taught many the Craft. When she finished and rejoined her mother (dia-holy, ana-mother), she left instructions on how to conjure her for further help. The spells have been passed down from mother to daughter, surviving patriarchy. The Craft is the religion of the oppressed. There is only one rule: "Harm none, and do as thou wilt."

The power of the mind is really what's behind the spells' success. The ingredients in spells represent earth, air, fire, and water, and what we do, in token, is to make the wish a fact before the macrocosm adopts it. It is given birth by you.

General Rules

Correlate your spells with the phases of the moon. On the waxing moon, do positive spells: love, health, money, success. The nine-day spells should land on the full moon, when boons are granted. On the waning moon, tie that which is loose, dispel evil, return bad vibes. Correlate your spells with the proper planets, if you can. Know the proper name for the Goddess for the different aspects appropriate for the spell. Remember, the Lady who weaves our lives has a certain pattern for all people to fulfill; if you go against what is not to be, don't lose heart, but understand the Goddess has veto power. Bless her will, and search for wisdom.

The following samples of spells cover a few issues in life; it is by no means complete.

If you are a beginner, I recommend you work with candle magic spells. They are very powerful and it is easy to relate to the fires. Make sure your altar is fireproof; cover it with aluminum foil if you leave candles alone often. By understanding the relationship of the colors to the deep mind, you can devise the spells yourself eventually.

In candle magic, we have seen the fast advancement of witches. The oils represent the water element, so that is why anointing candles is important. Coordinating colors with oils and incense makes a good candle spell. Candles can be used in three-day spells, nine-day spells, and one-night spells. It is all up to your given circumstances.

Herbal spells are more secretive; the roots and leaves are hidden craftfully in the room. It is what we use to "dress" a space for business, happiness, peace. Herbal spells are very personal, particularly when roots are kept on your body so that no one can touch them. I love them because in Europe herbal spells are mostly used.

Voodoo spells would sit very well with black sisters, to whose cultural heritage they belong. There isn't anything evil about them; they work like all other spells. You can cure and you can hex, depending on what your intent is. Voodoo spells usually take nine days, and the image is burned on the tenth day. You dispose of dolls representing others; you keep dolls that represent yourself in the house, especially for money or love.

The combination of all the above is fine, provided you understand the magical properties of herbs, candles, powders, and oils, and coordinate them accordingly.

Anyone who tells women not to practice magic because it is "dangerous" and it comes back to them is propagating fear. Women invented magic, invented the entire matriarchal culture, and women ruled the world for a very long and successful period by psychic powers. Rediscover your powers! The only danger in throwing spells is ignorance. So study, experiment, grow!

Candle Spells

The purpose of the spell determines the color of the candles used. Check the meanings of colors listed in the earlier section on Tools of the Craft—Material.

With Dove's Blood Ink (an herb used for commanding), write your wish on a white piece of parchment paper. Place it under the candle. Anoint the candle according to the desire; if it is love, use Cleopatra,

Lover oil, or Rosa Ava. If it is money, anoint the candle with Money Drawing oil. If it is power, anoint with Seven Power oil, and so on. Take a sharp instrument and write what you want three times on the candle. Burn incense again according to the purpose, but if you have frankincense and myrrh, the Goddess listens. Say:

*Upon this candle I will write
What I receive of thee tonight.
Grant what I wish you to do,
I dedicate this rite to you.
I trust that you will grant this boon,
O lovely Goddess of the Moon.
I call earth to bond my spell,
Air speed its travel well.
Fire give it spirit from above,
Water quench my spell with love.
So mote it be!*

—Sybil Leek

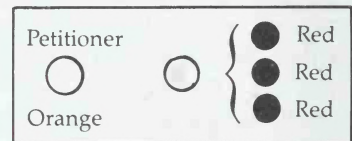
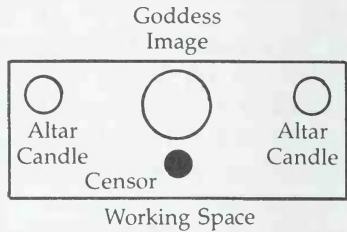
This is best performed at the full moon.

For Health

Light white candles on the altar. Think about the work you will do. Light incense: White Magic, Ritual, or Our Sister of Guadalupe. As the incense fills your space, think about the Goddess of Life permeating the pores of your body.

Light your petitioner candle, which is either your astral color or a deep green candle representing the color of life. Write your name three times on it with something sharp; anoint it with Seven Power oil, Blessing oil, or your own ritual oil. Say:

*This is me
In excellent health.
The blessing of the Life Goddess
Is upon me so that I may prosper!*



Light an orange candle and say:

*This flame draws all that is good,
All that is health, all that is strength to me!*

Light three red candles and say:

*Here is the strength,
The power of the Goddess of Life.
Here is her fire of life,
The threefold Goddess who rules over
Life and death and beauty.*

*This is the fire that enters my body
To build, to maintain, to prosper my life!*

Contemplate what you have said, then say:

*Hygia, Goddess of Health, enter my mind so that I will
think strong. Blessed be. Goddess Hygia, enter the cells in
my body, one by one, and make them whole; make them
strong. Blessed be.*

*Goddess of Life, infuse the force in me that created the uni-
verse. Increase the force toward me that created the planet
earth. Protect my organic life, so that it maintains me in
this incarnation. Blessed be!*

Do this every Friday, the day of Venus (Goddess of life), or Freya, the Nordic Goddess who gave us the name Friday. Do this for seven succeeding Fridays.

For Love

Take a Seven Power candle and Most Powerful Love incense and burn them a little each morning and each night. Soon your true love will show up—among the others who also come forth lusting for your body. Wade through them and pick.

Take an image candle, and anoint it with Cleopatra oil, which is for commanding love. Write the name of the person you want on the front and back. Also, anoint an image candle to represent yourself. Burn Most Powerful Love incense, a little bit in the morning and evening. Every night for three nights, move the two images closer and closer together. When the candles touch, let them burn down together. Collect the remnants and throw them in a living body of water (river, ocean, etc.), turn away, and don't look back. Your loved one will turn to you within a full cycle of the moon.

To Influence the Minds of Others

Time: Waxing moon.

Take a purple skull candle, representing your target. Write the name of the person whom you wish to influence on the back of the skull and all around the skull write the thought you wish that person to perceive. Be resourceful in solutions. Now anoint the candle with Controlling oil, Rosa Ava oil, or Patchouli oil.

Light the candle on your altar after sundown, but it is best to do late at night when this person is surely asleep. Then meditate on the

person, thinking what you want to suggest. Go back to sleep yourself; put out the candle in the morning.

Do this three nights in succession; the third night let it go down all the way. Gather the remnants and throw them into a living body of water. It is done.

Spell to Improve Psychic Powers

Spells to improve psychic powers are best performed at the new and full moon. Psychic ability is not developed during the course of one spell, but rather in the series of events that constitutes one's life. Studying the stars, dream recording, and maintaining a healthy diet are also good steps toward development.

As a spell to release your third eye, dress in yellow and place yellow candles on your altar. If you have a crystal ball, place it in the center. Brew yourself a cup of saffron tea to drink while meditating. Sit comfortably in front of your altar, breathing deeply, and think of your spine as a serpent uncoiling, reaching up through your body and raising your energy. Light incense containing any of several herbs good for psychic work, such as wood betony, sandalwood, olibanum, uva ursi, nutmeg powder, or orris root powder. Invoke Aradia, the Goddess of the Witches. Ask the Goddess to open your third eye.

As you sit sipping your tea, try to reach for a state of mind that is between being asleep and being awake. This is an important zone to explore. It may take some struggle to maintain this semi-conscious state once you achieve it, so keep saying to yourself,

*My name is _____. I control my body. I will not give up
my body unless I want to. I will always be able to return
to my body.*

Do not spend more than forty-five minutes at this. When you retire, hold for a moment that fleeting feeling that comes just before slipping into sleep. Hold it and remember it, then let it go. Keep yellow candles burning in your room, fresh flowers by your bed, and a window open so you have fresh air at night.

Spell to Stop Harrassment at Work or School

This spell is to stop harrassment at work or school, and it should be performed during the waning phase of the moon for best results.

Prepare your altar with white altar candles. Use a brown image candle to represent the person who is harrassing you. Anoint this candle with Rosa Ava or Bendover oil. Write the person's name on the candle, front and back. On a piece of parchment paper, write:

*From now on, _____ (name) will say nothing but
sweet words about me and to me. By the power of Aradia,
so mote it be!*

Put a drop of honey in the middle of the paper and roll it into a ball. Heat your athalme, make a gash in the candle's mouth, and stuff the paper ball into it. Burn High Priestess incense. Let the candle burn a little while every night for an odd number of nights, for a maximum of nine nights. Throw the remnants into a living body of water, but save some of the ashes from the incense burner to sprinkle in the path of your oppressor.

Spell to Find a Home

This is best performed during the waxing phase of the moon. On a piece of white paper, in Dove's Blood ink, draw a picture of the home you want, and visualize it in detail. Place it on your altar under a brown candle anointed with Rosa Ava oil. Use white altar candles, a single rose centerpiece, and Spirit Help incense. Go to your altar after sundown. Light white candles as usual, and light the brown candle, saying:

*This is my home, my earth, my cave, my castle.
Demeter, help to make it better.
Demeter, bring me home! Bring me home! Bring me home!
So mote it be!*

Do this spell three nights, and actively look for a place during the spell period. Dispose of the spell as usual.

Spell for Productive Studying

This spell should be performed during any period in which you are going to study. Use yellow altar candles anointed with Van-Van oil, and a yellow candle to represent yourself, anointed with Bewitched oil. Light them while you study, and burn Sophia incense. Before you settle down to work, stand in front of your altar and address Sophia thusly:

*Goddess of Wisdom, to you I pray!
My mind clear and receptive stay.
All in true accord with thee,
As my word, so mote it be!
Give me light! Blessed be.*

Spells for Weather Work

Spell to Still the Winds

This spell is best performed whenever winds are blowing too hard or are doing damage of some sort. Create the circle and place the cauldron in the corner of the universe from which the wind is blowing. Unify the group and raise power by humming louder and louder, then chant:

*Boreas, Boreas, Boreas, Old Mother!
Your lover, the Northern Star, is calling.
Recall your stags to the warm stables.
Return your breath to the clouds above me.
Blow softly to us, Grandmother Wind.*

*Boreas, blow above us, blow above us!
Let our candles burn for your praise,
Let our cauldron please your senses.
Wind Mother, dismount your forces!
Wind Mother, come have supper with us.
Wind Mother Boreas, dismount your forces.
Blessed be.*

After a moment, say to the wind:

*We understand the wisdom in the forces of Nature.
We understand that you know what needs to be done.
If your winds have not tired in fifteen minutes,
We will take our devotions indoors.
But if our company is dear to you,
Great goddess give us a sign.*

The wind usually takes a few minutes to die down. After you have spoken, in fact, she may even get gustier and stronger. If the wind does not calm down within fifteen minutes, then you must assume that she has serious blowing to do. The Goddess often acts protectively toward us, but She owes us nothing. She is Queen and sister too.

Spell to Raise a Storm

This spell will help you raise a storm whenever one is needed. It is usually done by a shaman who goes into a field with her shaman drum and stands in front of a huge, smoking fire, built for the occasion. She begins by drumming up the spirits and singing:

*Diana . . . Diana . . . Diana . . .
I am summoning forty-five spirits from the west!
I am summoning forty-five spirits from the east!*

*Bring now furies of hail, furies of water,
Their limbs with lightning afire,
Biting with water into our fields.
Enthroned Queens of fire,
The archers of the sacred bows and arrows,
The gatherers of rain from the wide skies,
Graciously be merciful to us!
Our fields and herbs with blessings keep safe!
Rains, rains, rains,
Give from your wide skies, burst water upon us!
Behold our wine in your chalice,
Accept our offerings to you!
Send the dark clouds over us,
Surround our fields with stormy rains.
You who wield the thunderbolts,
We call upon Thee!
Blessed be! Blessings be!*

In some countries, the shamen draw moon symbols on the ground in flour and barley, then dance around them. If you need a really large storm, work on it for three consecutive evenings at dusk. Use wands instead of knives, and instruments (drums, cymbals, rattles, anything) for making sounds to be shouted with great emotion and energy.

To Get Rid of What Separates One from a Lover

This is an interesting candle, red with a snake entwined around it. The snake is a very ancient symbol of regeneration.

Take your candle and anoint it; write onto the snake all the things that separate you from your loved one (pride, ignorance, etc.). Write

on the smooth part of the candle your name and your lover's name, and the Goddess Diana's name three times. If you have a little more space on it, write "May _____ (name) and myself be lovers in trust forever."

Now anoint the smooth parts with Lover's oil, Cleopatra oil, or Rosa Ava oil. Then anoint the snake separately with some burning oil to burn away the obstacles. Cinnamon, Cayenne, or Rosemary work well.

Place this candle on your altar, and burn it during the waxing moon. Say:

*As this candle burns, so shall the obstacles melt between
me and _____ (name). So mote it be!*

Do this three nights in succession; on the third night, let it burn all the way down. Then collect the remnants and throw them into a body of living water.

For Painless Separation

Often when a love affair is over, to part is an art. Take two image candles, representing the correct sexes of the participating people, and place them on your altar. Anoint them with Forget oil. Place them facing each other. Write the names on the back, and pentagrams as well. Then light your altar candles and your incense and meditate on this affair, and about how one wants to preserve the relationship after the love affair. Then move the lit image candles away from each other for three days, moving the candles a little more apart each day. Say:

*Warm was the passion, cold is now the heart;
Let _____ (name) and _____ (name) painlessly part.
Come the fire of friendship and alliance instead
In the name of Sophia, Goddess of wisdom.
So mote it be!*

Burn Sophia incense or ritual incense. After the three days, when the figures reach the farthest point, let them burn down all the way. Collect the remnants, and throw them into a moving body of water. Do not look back.

To Hex a Rapist

This spell has good feedback. Several women have performed it and the rapists were caught and put in jail; one died.

At the waning moon, preferably just three days before a dark

moon, take a black image or a black penis candle, and write on it what you want to happen to the rapist. Name it "rapist" on the front and the back; if it is a penis candle, write it on the tip.

Anoint it with Double-Cross oil and your urine. If you have it, menstrual blood should be added. Black Arts oil is also a good oil to use. Then place the black candle on your altar with two white candles on the sides of your Mother Goddess image; place this in front of her.

Light your incense. Black Arts incense was used by one witch, and Sabbat incense was used by another. Again, your preference wins. As you light the candle, say:

In the most holy name of Hecate, the Goddess of life and death, she who holds the key to the land of the underworld, let this rapist be caught by his own stupidity, by his own ego, by his own evil. So mote it be!

Sit there awhile imagining his power diminishing as the candle burns lower. See him getting caught; see him lose at the trial. See him destroyed. Know that rape is the foundation of patriarchy, and to attack the rapist is not black magic, because you are not attacking the innocent. Have the courage to turn to the Goddess Hecate, who is threeformed, and who is active to defend women against rape.

When you finish your spell and the candle has burned down all the way, collect all remnants and take them to a living body of water and throw them into the waves. After you throw them, turn away and do not look back, lest you break the spell.

Light a blue and white candle on your altar at home for blessings and protection.

To Get a Job

This spell works on two levels. First, pinpoint the target; research exactly what job you want and where it is located. Once that is done, set up your altar as usual, and place two brown candles on it. Write on them the name of the job and where it is. It does not need to be quite precise; you can say "downtown," for example. Place a green candle representing yourself in the middle. All three candles are anointed with Money Drawing oil. Burn Money Drawing incense. Before the job interview, light the candle, saying:

This brown candle is the stability I seek; this other brown candle is the wealth I seek, this green candle is the life force of mine that draws them to me.

Meditate a few minutes and then leave for your interview. Do not

put out the candles while you are gone, only after you have returned. Light a purple one-week candle to represent power over your fates; anoint it, too, with Money Drawing oil.

To use Money Drawing oil correctly, anoint your purse, or where your money is kept, even your checkbook. Place every bit of money that comes to you on the altar and offer it to the Mother Goddess before you deposit it or spend it. If you are about to start a new phase in your monetary affairs, it is a good idea to buy a new purse for the new income.

To Change Your Luck

One can perform this spell as often as one feels changes are needed. This spell is designed to change luck for the better, for example, to break a run of bad luck or a feeling of lostness. If your luck is generally fine, but one particular project isn't working out, concentrate on that alone.

The best time to perform this spell is during a new moon when a good crescent is seen.

The altar is set up dressed with the usual white and aluminum foil to avoid a fire hazard. The two white altar candles are placed on each side of your Mother Goddess image, and the censer (incense vessel) in front of that. You need one candle to represent yourself, usually your astral color, three orange candles, one gray, and one black.

Light the two white altar candles. Pause to think about what you will do. Light the incense and let your space be filled with it. Light your astral candle; this candle represents yourself; it is you in all things. Light all three orange candles and say:

Encouragement and attraction be mine, to attract good fortune.

Light the black candle, saying:

Here is all the bad luck of my life, and all that went ill with me, hardships and disappointments.

Light the gray candle, saying:

Neutralize all that was bad. Let the bad come to a halt and then swing to improvement.

Meditate on your luck reversing from the bad and swinging to the better. Think about how it looks when it is improved. Then say:

Oh Goddess Urania, wise Goddess of change! My roads have been blocked by ignorance; lead me from them hence. I see no direction, and plead for your guiding light. My daughter, the fates indeed have tested you, but take

heart. Your efforts to eliminate the bad have been ambitious. What do you want?

My luck must change.

Daughter, it shall be done. For change is the soul of nature. And your ambition is the key. Success shall be yours!

When then may I find this change? When will ignorance disperse, obsessions disappear, illness heal, and good moods grow?

Within a moon, that I vow, all shall be well. Like a seed, your position shall grow into fulfillment. The changing phases of Diana will graciously add threads for your tapestry of life. Smiles come over their faces.

How so?

They already see your future!

So mote it be!

For a Successful School Year

Use yellow candles on your altar, even for altar candles. Anoint candles with Van-Van oil or Bewitched oil. Light the candles while you are studying and keep them burning while you work. Burn Quick Mind or Sophia incense.

Before you settle down to study, pray to Sophia:

*Goddess of Wisdom, to you I pray,
My mind clear and receptive stay.
All in true accord with Thee,
As my word, so mote it be!
Give me light! Blessed be.*

To Free Political Prisoners

One spell feminist witches often have need for is that which brings aid to political prisoners. Throughout history, oppressed peoples have used their native (pagan) religion as a liberating force, on both the spiritual and physical planes. As feminist witches, we too draw upon our ancient tradition of using our magic and psychic powers as tools and weapons in our liberation. Think of energizing your psyche and empowering yourself and your sisters as warriors with the magic of a ritual, a drumbeat, a spell, a demonstration.

You will need some object that represents the person or people you wish to go free. If a photo, personal property, or newspaper clipping is not available, then write the person's name in Dove's

Blood ink on a small piece of parchment paper and draw a circled pentagram over the name. Tie a gray thread around the object to symbolize the chains (and the system) that bind the person(s). Place this on your altar and surround it with your most powerful magical objects—stones, jewelry, feathers, symbols. I use four magical stones I've collected, and I place a turquoise and coral Hopi brooch on the object.

Fill your chalice with pure water to represent the person's free flow and liberation. Anoint a white candle with Seven Power, Artemis, or High Joan oil. A glass jar candle is best but a taper will do. Light some High Joan, Helping Hand, or any basic ritual incense and bless your candle. Light your two white altar candles and ask the Goddess for help with your spell. Concentrate on the object representing the person(s) and say:

In the name of all the forces of justice, this person must go free. Great Goddess of a Thousand Names, Lady Luck, Justicia, all voices of Truth and Justice sing of _____ (name)'s innocence. S(he) must go free. Great Goddess, bless the speedy liberation of _____ (name). S(he) must go free!

Light the white candle and chant over it again and again, "Free, free, s(he) must go free!" When power has been raised, imagine that person in front of you. As you cut the gray thread with your athame, look deeply into their eyes and say:

Dear Sister (Brother), and so shall you be protected from all harm both physical and psychic. The enemy no longer binds you, your spirit is free! So shall you be radiant with hope and optimism and inspiration, and your body shall dance with energy and good health. Supporters will flock to your case and work without cease until you are free. You glow with innocence and it is apparent to all. The great forces of Justice smile upon you and remove all obstacles from your path. The Goddess shall be with you always. Dear Sister (Brother), I send you much energy and love. You shall go free! So mote it be! Blessed be.

Feel free to change the working of the spell to include specifics about the person, such as trial details and dates, prison name and conditions, etc. Extinguish all candles except the one in the glass jar. Glass jar candles should burn out on their own because they are complete spells in themselves. Repeat this spell for nine consecutive nights and before each court appearance, demonstration, or prison visit. If possible, start it on the night of the new moon. Throw the candlewax

remains into a living body of water. You can do other spells and blessings in conjunction with this spell. Think positively and lovingly about the person and your energy will be felt.

Money Spell

Decorate your altar with money-drawing herbs: sage, mandrake, red clover, blood root, camomile, nutmeg, myrrh, etc. Anoint one orange glass candle with Money Drawing oil, and bless the candle in the name of Isis of the Thousand Breasts. Place it in the center of your altar; at the four corners of the universe, place four green glass candles, anointed with Magnet oil, as well as Money Drawing oil.

Begin the ritual after sundown, after contemplating the skies in looking for the evening star, Venus. Once she appears, you can begin. Light two white altar candles first, saying:

Blessed be, thou creature of fire.

acknowledging that the flames are conscious creatures. Then light your thurible with herbal mix or Money Drawing incense (High Joan the Conqueress):

Great Mother, I come to you. I live in this world, and the wealth is all in the hands of the masters, mostly men. They have had the power now for ten thousand years. Great Mother, we are asking you to help. You are the true owner of the wealth; please blow the karmic winds in our favor. Let my cupboard fill up with food, and my checkbook with balances. Allow me the livelihood of the daughters of Isis; be my nurturing mother. I invoke thee. Souls of nature, woven within all hearts, make the jobs go to women and all have enough.

Now light the orange candle and say:

This candle represents me. Like the magnet, I draw encouragement, money, friends around me.

Then light the green candles all around, from east to north. Say:

Thus I draw money from the east, the south, the west, and the north.

Surround your orange candle evenly with cinnamon and contemplate. Say:

*Mine is the blood, the Mother's blood which promises life.
Mine is the blood that promises substance. Mine is the*

blood of the Lady of Plenty. The Goddess bestows reasonable wealth on her sisters who ask for it. Great Goddess, bless my life with health, and let me have no more want. So mote it be!

Each day for three days repeat this ritual, moving your green candles closer to the center. When they touch, let them burn down all the way. While they burn, always burn your money-drawing High Joan the Conqueress incense, and put all money that comes to you from now on onto your altar before depositing or spending it. This spell can be followed with a white candle lit while the flame still burns in the ritual candles, so the fire is continued from the spell.

Interesting Candle Magic

The Ancient Seven-Day Candle Spell

This spell uses what is called a knob candle, made of seven knobs. The candles are either one solid color (all red, all purple, etc.), or each knob has a different color, much like the seven power candle. Remember the meaning of the colors, and choose wisely. If you have the Seven Power knob candle, however, you can't go wrong.

Each day after sundown when the evening star rises, light one knob and contemplate the meaning of your life. (When green burns, think of life force; when red burns, think of life fire, bringing appropriate gifts, money, energy; with yellow, spirituality; with purple, synthesis; with blue, protection; with white, blessings; with pink, happiness.) Play with the images, conjuring the most desirable changes. When the one-color candle is used, stare into the fire and concentrate on the same wish as long as the knob burns.

Recommended oils to use are Seven Power, Bendover, or any favorite ritual oil.

After the spell, it is best to erase from the conscious mind what happened and go on with your next project.

Herbal Recipes

Acacia: Acacia is said to be sacred to Diana, and was one of the sacred trees in the ancient groves. Mix a little with sandalwood incense and burn them. This allows the spirits to commune with you.

Witches Broom: Soaked in water, it makes excellent purifying water. Sprinkle it where magic work is to be done.

Marigold: Mix equal parts of marigold, calamus, hops, lemon verbena, and mace. Soak them in a dark place for nine days in a

gallon of water. Use a cupful for your daily bath. This wins the admiration and respect of others.

Mandrake: In Europe, one sleeps with a new mandrake root in bed for three nights of the full moon. After that, one places it on the altar for special spells. When you do your conjurings, hold the root in your hand. Take it with you to your confrontations, important meetings, etc. Add a little of the same herb to your incenses to fortify the effect.

Cayenne Drink: This is good for winter festivals or on cold nights when you want to worship sky-clad. Take this drink along to excite your blood, to get the circulation moving well, and to spice up the dancing.

Mix one quart of half-and-half with two spoonfuls of red cayenne that you have dissolved in a little boiling water. Add this to the half-and-half and mix. It tastes very smooth but is potent, so don't take too much of it.

You may add brandy to it for an extra "kick" if you so desire.

Vervain: Highly prized by the ancients. It is sacred to Venus. Vervain soaked in water is very useful in banishing evil, purifying ritual grounds, coveners, etc. Roll your love candles in it after anointing to fortify your spell. Added to incense, it brings good luck and inspiration.

On your altar, arrange seven little mounds of vervain, and light a white candle in the middle for devotion. When you light it, say:

In the name of the Triple Goddess whose names are as many as the stars, protect me from evil persons; keep trouble afar, purify me from fear and oppression. Instead, bring me freedom and inspiration in the name of Isis. So mote it be! Blessed be!

This little witchy devotion can be used with a green candle for money spells, or pink for love, etc. It's fine to change the words to suit yourself, but remember, it works better if it rhymes. Perform it at the convenience of your schedule. This is good on a daily basis to sharpen your meditation and to remove fear.

Angelica: Sprinkle a little of this herb (which is sacred to Sophia) into the corners of your house to maintain or restore peace and harmony. Angelica tea is said to prolong life, defeat evil, exorcise. Sometimes it is called Holy Herb.

To ward off witchcraft, mix it with marjoram, cloves, and dill. Tie it into a small white handkerchief and hang it prominently from your window.

Alfalfa: Sprinkle it into your cupboards to ward off hunger.

Devil's Shoestring: Keep a piece exposed on your bedside. Placed

among some wild flowers it works better. It wards off nightmares. To make the Most Powerful Hand talisman, add to Helping Hand root, mandrake, High Joan the Conqueress, and three grains of Grains of Paradise representing the Triple Goddess; fold into a black flannel cloth, folding toward you each time. Then sew it up with white and yellow thread. It is used by gamblers or people who live dangerously. Feed it every new moon with some ritual oil; Has No Hanna oil is best for women.

Dragon's Blood Reed: A piece of this carried on the body brings great good luck. Bath beads made from this herb are beautiful purification baths before going to court, performing a ritual, etc.

Irish Moss: Place it in your home under the rug to have the luck of the Irish.

Laurel: Secure three laurel leaves and three small parchment papers. Write the names of the Triple Goddess on each paper: Diana, Isis, Hecate. Keep the laurel and parchment with the names in a red flannel bag in your pocket. Say before starting your game of chance:

Isis of the Thousand Breasts, make my chance the best one yet.

Win you shall. It is a good idea for nongamblers and women survivors in difficult jobs and situations.

Myrtle: Sacred to Artemis. Most lucky in all matters. Carry Myrtle in your red flannel bag, and you will have love, health, and wealth in life. Artemis be blessed.

Yellow Duck: Make a tea of this herb and wash the doorknobs and entrance to the business with it. It soon will increase your customers. At home, it is useful also to make your dealings with the outside more successful.

Tonka Beans: These are aromatic black beans. Keep them in your red flannel mojo bag for general good luck, freedom from illness, and use them for wishing beans. When you wish with them, you must throw the one you wished upon in a body of water.

Other goodies to carry for good luck are: lovage root, High Joan the Conqueress, star anise, peony, May apple, mustard seeds, galenagal, lion's tooth, blessed thistle, burning bush, chamomile, clover, damiana, cascara, and Sagrada oil.

For Love/Attraction

Absinthe: Sprinkle this herb under the bed of a lover to draw the lover to you (must be crafty).

Beth Root: Wear this as a necklace to draw lovers.

Coriander: Take seven grains and grind them in your mortar saying:

Warm seed, warm heart, let them never be apart.

Do this three times. Then add this herb to wine and serve it to the one you desire.

Dragon's Reed Powder: When a lover is slow in reacting to you, burn this along with some love incense and the lover will pick up intensity. Do this while the person is visiting.

Lavender: To write a successful love letter, rub the entire sheet of paper with lavender flowers before starting to write it. Use Dove's Blood ink if you can. This is said to grant you whatever you wrote in the letter. (This can be applied to business letters as well.)

Other herbs known to bring lovers and happiness: lovage, linden, lotus, magnolia, laurel, ladies thumb, and horse chestnut.

This is a Celtic spell: Acquire six Horse Chestnuts and some red thread. Entwine the chestnuts on one cord, making knots on them and in between them, representing the thread of life. Burn a red candle on full moon evenings, saying:

Oh Diana, Goddess of love and hunt, please listen to your daughter. Make these knots to capture the heart of _____ (name). Let neither rest nor sleep find her till she comes our troth to bind. Goddess whose arrows never fail, bless for us this love affair!

Then burn this charm in your cauldron with other aromatic herbs, especially fennel, which is sacred to Diana. Your love will come to you within a moon.

For Money

To attract money, take a bill (the bigger the better) and some red thread. Anoint amazon root (High Joan the Conqueress root) and the money with High Joan the Conqueress oil. Now with the back showing, wrap the bill around the root, tie it with red thread three times, each time tying a knot and saying:

In the name of the nymph, the maiden, and the Mother, increase my wealth. Oh Diana! Let me have no want! Let me have enough! So mote it be!

Keep this talisman in your purse, which you also anoint with Money Drawing oil. Renew the oil every new moon, holding up your purse to the moon, rattling the contents three times.

Basic Protection of Person, House, Car, and Motorcycle

This spell is a must for women in patriarchal oppression. Do this at the new moon, when you can see a fine crescent in the sky. Prepare your house by cleaning it thoroughly, getting in touch with your things, doing laundry even. For your floor, prepare a quart of hot water and steep some basil in it (after you have already washed the floor as usual). Prepare another dish of water steeped with verbena or witches' broom (Scottish broom). Even yellow duck is fine. Light your thurible and place frankincense and myrrh into it. Also get a fresh egg, and write your name three times on it with an art pen (or any other pen you love). Pass it through the incense smoke and say:

In the name of Habondia, lady of plenty, in the name of Fortuna, lady who weaves the threads of my life, in the name of the fair Diana, the huntress of the night, may my person be blessed with security. May evil men stay away from my house! May nothing but good pass across my threshold!

Now open your doors and place your incense in the doorway from which the wind blows, so that the smoke gets swept through your space. Meanwhile, wash your floors with the basil water to bring happiness and good fortune into the house. Then take the verbena and sprinkle it in all the corners of your house, repeating the same blessing. Now take the incense and walk three times around your space on the outside. If you have windows that show on the street, you can especially seal them with your incense by drawing the pentagram of protection in the air, and again at any entrances, doors, or openings. When you have completed your circles, bury your egg in the earth just outside of your home, or if it is an apartment, bury it in a pot of earth. You can then put flowers in it and keep the pot at your door. Good protection herbs are rue, periwinkle, verbena, lemon verbena, myrtle tree, and even geraniums. These herbs are regarded as familiars from the queendom of plants. Then close the house and let it fill with the sacred fumes of frankincense and myrrh.

Treat your car or motorcycle the same way as your house. Walk around it three times (always from east to south) saying your blessings (improvise), and then fill your car or motorcycle with the scent.

To complete this spell, clean your altar at night and perform a self-blessing, and go to sleep with a white candle in a glass jar burning on your altar.

To Regain Psychic Balance After Rape

Gather your women friends around you and let them go and pick blossoms. Prepare a ritual bath (any time of the day or night) and throw a pinch of salt into the tub for purification. Light Peace incense or ritual incense. Let your women friends attend to you: scrub your back, chit chat, etc. Throw the flowers they have picked in the tub. Luxuriate in this setting, talking about renewal and beauty, especially yours.

After your bath, make sure your bed (if this patriarchal outrage has occurred on it) is also renewed. Let your friends burn the sheets and take the mattress outside and beat it. Let the sun bleach away the sorrow and humiliation. Keep in mind, you are still beautiful, and it is not your fault. May patriarchy fall.

Voodoo Spells

Voodoo means literally "god." African countries developed it, but it can be found in many varieties in the Tahitian Islands, Hungary, Russia, everywhere. The significance here is, instead of candles, you work with dolls. Or combine both. In the jungles, witches carried the sacred image of the Goddess (the centerpiece for their altar) as a doll. Little girls today play with their dolls as a tool for socializing, but herstorically, they imitate the priestesses who carried "dolls" of the Goddess.

Dolls can be made of clay, which is the most ancient form of voodoo. As in the microcosm, so in the macrocosm. If you create one situation in small, it will affect the big. Cause and effect. Such is the philosophy behind practicing this craft.

Righteous Hex (reserved for violent criminals only)

Perform this only when you *know, not just think*, that someone has harmed you. A witch who cannot hex cannot heal. Cupcakism, turning the other cheek is not for witches.

Do this at the waning moon. Check your starfinder or local astrologist about Saturn's or Mars' course in the sky.

Prepare a black altar. For the centerpiece, use the Goddess's hag image, Hecate, who is threefold. Decorate your altar with cones,

blackthorn, and mandrake. From black cloth, cut out a doll-shaped form, resembling your enemy, sew it around from east to north to west to south (widdershins), and leave only a small part open. Stuff it with boldo leaves and finish the sewing. Indicate the eyes, mouth, nose, and hair on the doll. On a piece of parchment paper, write the name of your enemy and attach it to the image. Say:

*Goddess Hecate, to you I pray,
With this enemy no good will ever stay.
Cut the lines of his life in three,
Doom him, doom him, so mote it be!*

When you pronounce this, take a mallet and break his "legs" by breaking the herb inside. Dust it with Graveyard Dust; anoint it with Double-Crossing oil, and burn your Black Arts incense. Imagine him totally miserable and with one leg broken. (It is a nice way to incapacitate rapists until they can be apprehended.) Do this three nights in a row. On the third night, burn the doll and bury it. Draw a triple cross over his grave with Dragon Blood powder. Walk away without looking back.

NOTE:

*Dispose of hexes as far away from your house as possible.
Each night you can break something else in him, or stick
black-headed pins into his liver or penis. May patriarchy
fall.*

For Winning in Court

Anoint a doll with Obeah oil. Place the doll on a clean white cloth. Sprinkle with Blue Vervain. Tie a white cord or string around the waist of the doll and say:

*Thus do I bind my enemy,
Who would speak against me.
Silent now is he,
While I go free, free, free!*

Repeat this seven times.

Mix equal parts of frankincense and myrrh and light. While it burns, verbalize your situation. Wrap the doll in the white cloth and hide it where no one will see it. Repeat this every night after sundown until the night before you are to appear, then repeat the entire spell for the last time. When it is finished and you have wrapped the doll in the white cloth, burn it and scatter the ashes to the four winds. When you appear in court, have a piece of High Joan the Conqueress in your pocket.

Old Hungarian Health Spell

When somebody is ill, and all the herbal medicines and the doctor's medicine seem to be no help to this person, perform this as a last try.

Lay the ill person naked in a beam of full moonshine. Have one basket filled with thirteen fresh eggs and another basket that is empty. Take one egg at a time and rub it on the person's skin slowly, touching all the crevices. When the entire egg surface is used, take the next fresh egg and place the used one in the empty basket. While you do this, say:

*By the power of Diana, by the power of Aradia,
May all that is ill be absorbed into this egg.
By the power of Queen Isis, so mote it be.*

When all thirteen eggs are used, take a little water, bless it, put salt in it, bless it again, and sprinkle it around the corners of the sick room, saying:

*The Goddess blesses her child. All is well now. Fresh new
health will glow.*

Dispose of the eggs in a living body of water, or bury them. Do not eat the eggs or you will get the illness.

Sample Recipes

The following recipes, which are broadly grouped by category, were contributed to Rowan Fairgrove from her booklet, *A Handbook of Botanical Incenses*.

Evocative

Artemis Evoking

Almond
Frankincense
Mandrake
Orris root
Wormwood

Call Spirits

Dittany of Crete
Dragon's Blood
Mandrake
Mistletoe

Earth and Water (to summon Elementals)

Basil
Damiana
Life Everlasting
Rosemary

Samhain

Anise seed
Dittany of Crete
Myrrh
Sandalwood
Oil of Bayberry
Oil of Patchouli

To Summon the Departed

Dittany of Crete
Wormwood

To Summon Spirits

3 pts Wormseed
2 pts Frankincense
2 pts Mastic or resin (bezoin,
myrrh)
3 pts Dittany of Crete
½ pt Olive oil
½ pt Wine
½ pt Honey
A few drops of the user's blood

To See Fairies

Hazel buds
Hollyhocks
Marigold
Rose
Thyme

Spirit Manifestations

Basil
Damiana
Dittany of Crete
Life Everlasting
Rosemary

Divinatory

Astral Travel

Frankincense
Lavender
Orris root
Sandalwood
Oil of Bayberry
Oil of Rose
Oil of Patchouli

Communication (Hermes Rites)

Cinnamon
Sandalwood
(Use in conjunction
with yellow candles.)

Communication

Lotus
Peppermint
Verbena

To See Things Honestly

1 pt Hyssop
2 pts Lily
2 pts Myrrh

Psychic Enhancement

Celery seed
Orris root

Vision & Dreams

Aloe
Dragon's Blood
Myrrh

Protective

Lady's Protection

1 pt Rowan
½ pt Orris root
1 pt Rosemary
1 pt Basil
1 pt St. John's Wort
Pinch of Dragon's Blood

Safety for Travelers

Cinnamon
Mastic gum
Saffron

Protection

Dragon's Blood
Mandrake
Mistletoe

Banishing

Banishing

Dragon's Blood
Garlic
Pine
St. John's Wort
Vervain, blue

Uncrossing

Anise seed
Ash
Dragon's Blood
Vervain, blue

Banishing Bad Vibes

Camphor
Rosemary

Healing

Against Contagious Disease

Lavender
Pineneedles
Rosemary
± Camphor
(Carries around the
location to be purified.)

Healing

Life Everlasting flowers
Myrrh
Oil of Rosemary

Spellcasting

Attract Psychic Phenomenon

Anise seed
Myrrh
Sandalwood
Oil of Bayberry
Oil of Patchouli

Beltain

Basil
Damiana
Life Everlasting
Rosemary
Flower oils of choice (Gardenia—
ecstasy; Heliotrope—
devotion; etc.)

Concentration

Cinnamon
Mastic gum
Olibanum

Full Moon

Anise seed
Lavender
Rosemary

Full Moon

Anise seed
Basil
Damiana
Life Everlasting
Rosemary

High Altar

Benzion
Frankincense
Myrrh
Rowan

Money Drawing

Frankincense
Myrrh
Nutmeg
Saffron
Sandalwood

New Moon

Anise seed
Camphor
Wormwood
± Lavender

Rites of Life

THIS SECTION IS A COLLECTION of rites and devotions that fall in the more-than-spells-but-not-quite-rituals classification. They are for both private and group work and can be done at any time.

A Devotion

On your altar, arrange seven mounds of vervain and light a white candle for devotion, placing it in the center of your altar. When you light the candle, say:

In the name of the Triple Goddess, whose names are as many as the stars, protect me from evil persons; keep trouble afar; purify me from all fear and oppression. Instead, bring me freedom and inspiration, in the name of Isis. So mote it be. Blessed be!

This little witchy devotion can be used with a green candle for money spells, or pink for love, purple for knowledge, etc. It's fine to change the words to suit yourself, but if it rhymes it will work better. This may be performed at your convenience, and is an excellent ritual for use on a daily basis to sharpen your meditation and remove any fears.

Meditation for Giving Thanks

Begin by cleaning and sprucing up your space. Create a festive atmosphere; decorate with bunches of Indian corn, ropes of garlic bulbs, and any and all symbols of a plentiful harvest. Clean your altar and cover it with a white cloth. Place an image of the Corn Mother (made of dried corn, preferably) in the center and a white candle on each side of her. Wear saffron, scarlet, or white robes. Light the white candles, burn your favorite incense (frankincense and myrrh are traditional) and settle down to meditate on your harvest.

Hymn to Ambika¹
(from the Sumerian)

*Devi!² Thou who removeth the pain of your daughters
Be gracious! Be gracious, Oh Mother of the World!
Be gracious, Oh Queen of the Universe!
Architect of the Universe!
Thou art, Oh Devi, the essence of all moving
and unmoving things!*

*Thou art the only support of the world,
Because thou art in the form of the earth!
By thee, who existed in the form of the water,
Is the whole universe pervaded.
Thou art She whose powers are unsurpassed.*

*Thou art the sustaining and eternal power.
Thou art the seed of the universe and
the supreme Maya.*

*All this universe has been bewitched by thee.
Thou, when pleased, art the course of salvation of nations.*

*All sciences are part of thee,
As also all women without exception
throughout the world.
By thee alone, Oh Mother, is the universe filled!
How can we praise thee?
Art thou not beyond all praise of the highest speech?*

*Rider in an aerial car yoked with swans,
Who assumes the form of energy,
Who sprinkles the water in which verbena is steeped;
Great Mother, all reverence to thee!*

*Who art attended by fowl and peacock.
Oh, Faultless One,
Who holdest the great shakti weapon and existeth in the
form of Courage,
Great Mother, all reverence to thee!*

*Oh, Devi! Who takest away afflictions of the universe
Be gracious to us who awake you within ourselves.
Oh, thou who are worthy of all praise,
Grant boons to the dwellers of the three worlds.³*

¹ Ambika is a word meaning "mother"; the name is an Indian goddess image.

² Devi literally means, "She Is."

³ The three worlds are the "unborn," the "living," and the "dead."

Here you can do a slow dance, thinking of Her three forms of energy. Offer fruits of the harvest on your altar and pour libations of wine on the ground for Her. Enjoy yourself and feast in honor of Her.

Devotion for the Dead

Go in the evening to the grave of your loved one. Tidy up some; plant some flowers or just turn over some of the top dirt. This is particularly nice for one who has died recently. Place a week-long white candle in a jar on the grave. Use Sandalwood oil to anoint the candle, and pour some of the oil on the ground as well. This is for wisdom. Light the candle saying, "Blessed be, thou spirit of _____ (name); I come to bring you love and energy." Light frankincense and myrrh in your censer, saying, "May the Goddess who is three-formed favor you with Her White Light. Look for this White Light of the Life Force for your peace and rest." Talk awhile informally with the spirit of your loved one, telling her the latest news. In closing say, "Blessed be your spirit, _____ (name). Blessed be your dreams. Sleep in bliss and never know fear, but only the peace of the Mother."

Parentalia

Recently my best friend lost her father to the Goddess as Crone—in this case to the May Queen, whose deathly aspects we often discuss. A beautiful death was granted to Harry, who died in the woods on his way home, under the May full moon.

Forty-nine days after the death of a parent, a celebration of the new awakening and a memorial party called "Parentalia" is held. We invite friends who have known the lost parent, relatives, siblings, people whom the parent liked, and cook a fine dinner. The foods are usually what the parent liked to eat when in life, keeping the colors of the foods toward red, to stimulate life.

Set the white table and arrange the company to surround an empty chair, where we invite the dead parent's spirit to partake with us. Then serve dinner and pile food on the plate assigned to the parent, fill her/his cup with whatever she/he enjoyed. That done, everybody begins the feasting, and behaves jovially, while telling stories about the person who passed on. This is a great opportunity for all loving friends to express their admiration, and what they received as gifts from the presence of the dead person while in life, how their experience was deep and meaningful, and how it changed their lives for the better. Toasting the spirit of the departed is an ancient way to

honor each other. Everyone wishes her/him deep peace and happiness.

My friend took a different route, and she invited her father to be her guiding spirit now that he was free of his earthly shortcomings. A parent would watch over you anyway. It is believed, however, that witches often tend the dead as if they were still alive. Tending involves remembering their birthdays and death days. On such occasions, making sure that a special time is taken out to feed the birds or enhancing nature in some way, for example, would be appropriate. Putting out milk and honey for the dead on Halloween is worldwide, but a glass of champagne, or a favorite brand of beer or red wine serves the same purpose. These foods and drinks get wasted, and are fed to the animals. No human can touch it.

There are many beneficial effects from celebrating Parentalia. There is a sense of the parent, often accompanied by vivid dreams as the dead people assure the living that they are all right. I had such a dream about my mother, and I felt truly cheered from her death. We need to open our perception to the world invisible. There, too, we have our roots, our ties, and affinities. We also have many helpers there. The world is one.

Ritual for Planting a Grove

This ritual has been done for many small groups of women (and large groups, too) around the country who wanted their affinity groups blessed and dedicated to the Goddess. The time that is best for this ritual is the waxing moon.

Form a regular circle, with purifications, consecration, and power raising. After evoking the Goddess and pouring libations to Her on the ground, the group to be planted comes forward and forms a smaller circle in the center of the larger one. The High Priestess offers a ball of red thread to the Goddess and then says to the women, "This thread represents the thread of our lives. The red color indicates a commitment to action. Do you accept this?" The women answer, "Yes, we do." The High Priestess turns to the woman on her left and wraps the thread three times around the woman's waist, blessing her in the name of the Nymph, the Maiden, and the Mother. This woman now takes the thread and does the same to the woman on her left, and so on around the circle. If the woman acting as High Priestess is to be part of the new grove, then she is included in the entwining thread. If not, then she steps back before tying the two ends together. After tying them together, she says, "As the thread of life is bound to a circle, so shall our struggles be bound

together. This new grove to the Goddess is formed. Blessed be. It is done." Then she and her maiden go around the circle cutting the thread between each woman, tying the ends to make the individual girdles, and saying, "The circle is never broken." Each woman answers, "Blessed be." Before the next gathering of the new grove, each woman should weave this cord into her nine-foot-long witch's girdle, which will afterward be worn at all Sabbats and while doing magical work. It is a very important protection symbol.

Tryst (Handfasting)

In Wicca, we have a ritual to celebrate a relationship that already exists. This ritual is called a tryst, a word literally meaning "meeting." It also means "trust."

Gather those friends whom you wish to take part in the ritual. At least two women should act as priestesses, as well as a young nymph (nine-year-olds are a favorite of Artemis). One priestess draws the circle with her wand while the other follows, marking out the circle with flour and barley. Next, the nymph purifies the circle with incense by walking from east to south to west to north, holding the censer and forming pentagrams in the air.

Create an altar inside the circle, located in the east as the corner for all new beginnings. Decorate the altar with red roses and a Goddess image. Place two chalices on the altar, one with red and one with white wine. For the feast, have a food to represent every part of the plant: root, stems, leaves, fruit, and flower. The two persons to be trysted should be dressed in loose white robes with their witches' girdles around their waists, and wearing golden and silver jewelry.

All are admitted to the circle by one priestess, while the other priestess purifies the women with salt and water, and consecrates each one with fire. Admitting the two to be trysted last, the priestesses close the circle and evoke the four corners of the universe. All people in the circle unify to raise power by humming or chanting. In the cauldron, tended by the nymph, burn herbal incenses sacred to Venus, some mandrake roots, and a little verbenā.

When power is raised and the energy feels strong, the two trysting move from the circle to stand facing each other before the altar. The priestess in the east evokes the Great Goddess to bless them by saying:

*I evoke thee, Great Mother of all!
I evoke thee by the Tree of Life,
By all that is living.*

FEMINIST WITCHCRAFT

*I evoke thee by root and stem, by stem and leaf,
By blossom and fruit.
Descend into this circle of life and bless this tryst!*

*Priestess: Do you, _____ (name), take _____
(name) as your lifelong companion, even if you love others
or not?*

Trustee: I do.

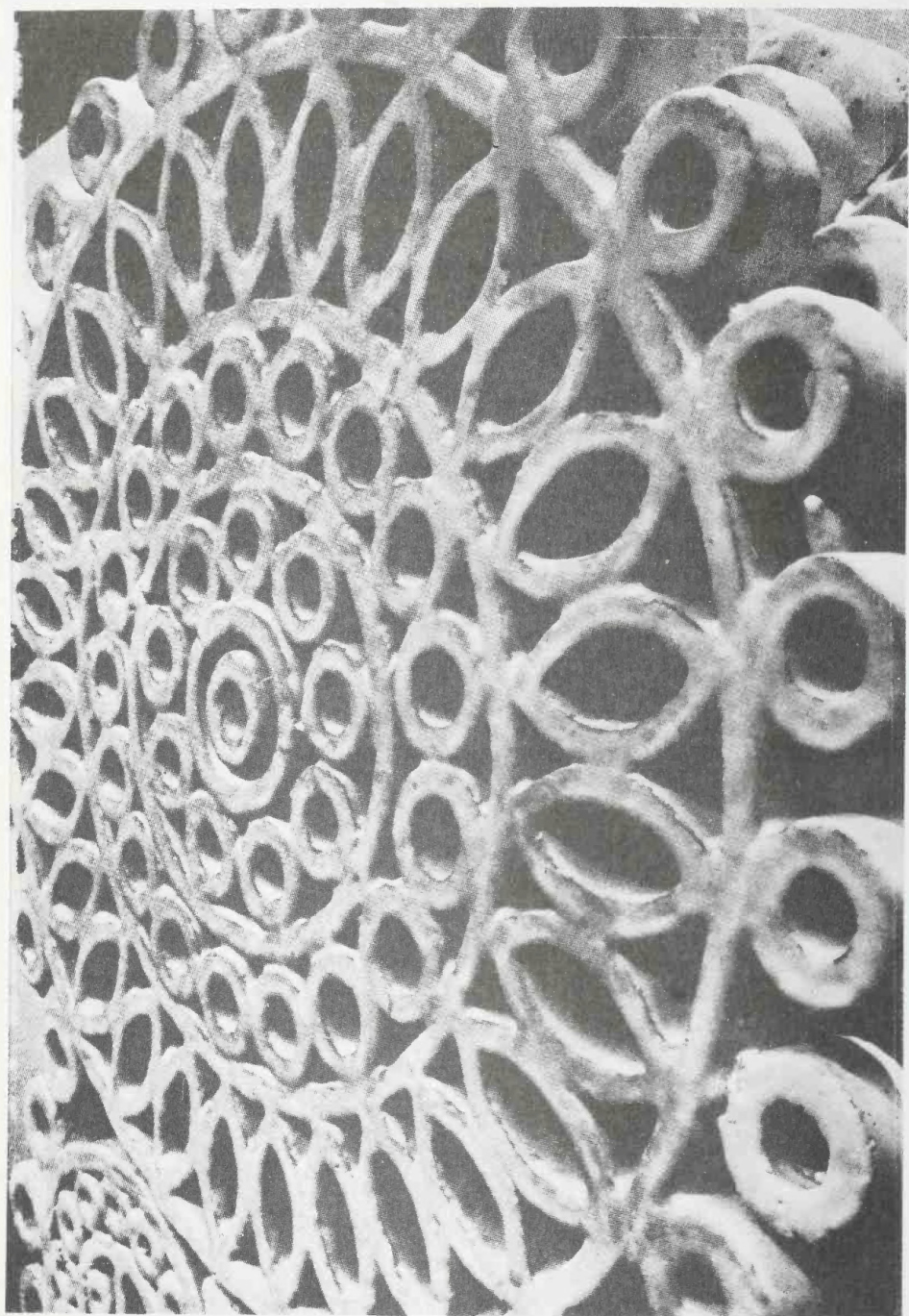
When the vows are exchanged, the couple "jumps" the broom (a branch of oak). When they land marks the first moment of their new lives together.

Calendar

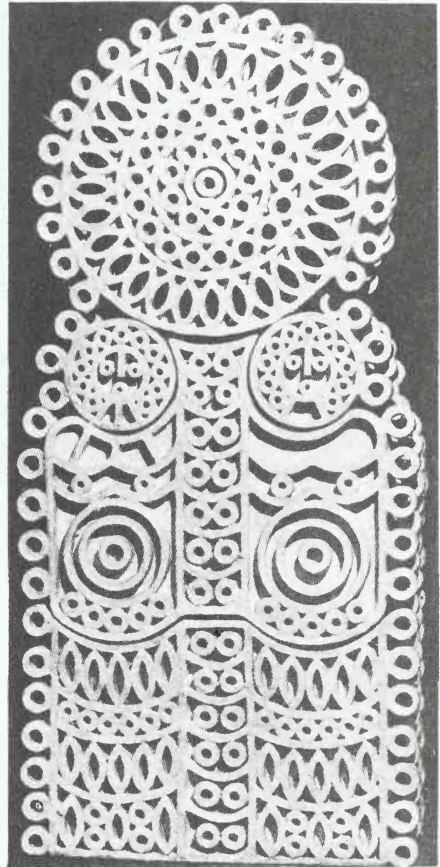
THE EIGHT SABBATS IN THE YEAR correspond to the solar calendar. They fall on the quarter days (solstices and equinoxes) and cross-quarter days (the high points in between).

Equinox means literally "equal night"; therefore, on those two special days each year, the vernal equinox and the autumnal equinox, the lengths of the day and night are the same. On these days, the sun is directly over the equator.

The solstice is the point at which the sun appears to be the farthest from the equator. The longest period of daylight is marked by the summer solstice and the shortest period of daylight is at winter solstice.



*Celebrating the
Holy Days
of the Earth*



The Sabbats

The Sacred Wheel

Study the Great Mandala of our lives—the Wheel of Karma, the Wheel of Life, the Way. All is encompassed by it. Nothing escapes the ordered, complicated, sensitive, and effective chain of events—the Wheel of Change. All that is alive must change. That is the Law. That which does not change dies (and thus changes). All is subject to the Law of the Way.

The Goddess Dike is associated with the Wheel, a floating, angel-like, winged Goddess, Victory. Her names are many. As Themis's daughter, She is sister to Truth, the Goddess Maat.

Contemplate the Great Mandala in terms of your internal life. Contemplate yourself as a part of the Great Design. You belong here. This is your spaceship. Nobody leaves to ascend to "heaven" or descend into "hell," because they both exist simultaneously in the here and now. You can move into heaven now, if you wish; you've probably already visited hell. Redemption is like responsibility; you cannot pass it on. It is you, and it is us, makers of Divine Choices, makers of Karma, makers of Change and maintainers of the Wheel.

What a beautiful spaceship we have to live on! As the Blue Planet in space, we have the only water in the entire solar system. Without water, there is no organic life. Aphrodite still lives here. Our Mother, Earth, Gaia, Demeter, Kore, Tara, Ceres, has dictated all seasons and changes into a calendar of life. Food is life. Knowing how to plant and reap is the core of every culture's reservoir of knowledge. That is one cycle of change.

Then there is the other—changes of the spirit, management of feelings, relationships, and personal well-being. Love is the food of the spirit. The communal events that bind communities together around spiritual issues make up our lives and are the highlights in our humanities.

Having celebrations of all sorts—calling, summoning the people to rejoice, parading, gathering together, feasting, purifying together, making oaths together, producing culture together, worshipping together—were stock and trade of the most important concerns of

the life-oriented society that women created. It is true these festivals and holy days were observed by both sexes for the most part, but they were "priestessed" by women.

Although diverse in function, the celebrations all had to do with the theme of the communal spirit of the year. Following the simple observance of these festivals, holy days and Sabbats would give rich exposure to the other people in one's community, and isolation of any one person (unless chosen) was virtually impossible. Hence, there was no loneliness as we know it today, that gnawing awareness that nobody cares. No one had to experience any deep degree of lovelessness, because the attitude toward love was such that, at least ritualistically, everybody had a chance to participate in communal sex as well as communal nurturing. Even the priestesses of Aphrodite vowed to distribute their favors evenly.

Today's calendar, with the meaningless and artificial days of so-called "celebration," which is usually synonymous with drinking and time off from work, pales in comparison with the gentle Path of Old. Therefore, try to celebrate the many holy days of this ancient calendar as often as you can, choosing at least one or two from each end of the wheel, and making the celebration of these sacred days a tradition for your family from now on.

Do not allow your soul to grow without tending to the spirits of old—our ancestors. You are part of a never-ending continuation and it is perfectly all right to take heart and sustenance from the past. When you allow the spirits to awaken in you, difficulties will be clarified and unseen powers suddenly revealed. Do not forget that the Goddess is re-emerging in the public consciousness today, but She has been with you from the beginning, and She is all that is attained at the end of desire.

Tread lightly into the soul's hidden desires. The hunger of the spirit will be satisfied by the motherly hands of the Goddess. The cost humanity will have to pay for ignoring and denying the Female Principle of the Universe is soaring. It is through this Female Principle that the Way will be found. Let this spaceship find home in the Mother's harbor—paradise restored, at least spiritually. By accepting all elements in nature, we make whole the collective and individual Soul.

Foreword to the Sabbat Rituals

Women who embark on the path, bear in mind that all of the rituals in the following pages are partially from the tradition of my own Dianic witchcraft. Also know that I have reclaimed them, and

therefore changed them to adjust to modern women's needs. There is nothing rigid in Goddess worship. Rituals can be researched and symbolism relearned and applied by any group of like-minded women who are inspired by the Goddess. These deeds will be equally valid. The important thing to remember is that beyond a certain structure upon which we all agree, creativity is the order of the night.

Therefore, read all of the pages, absorb what we communicate, and then create your own rituals, create your own tradition. The only consistent parts in all traditions are the acts of purification by water, consecration by fire, and creation of a magic circle, the theme of the Sabbats, the times of the holidays, the center focus, and the Triple Goddess of Life, Death, and Beauty. All other acts will spring forth from womansouls, all invocations from inspiration, and all devotions from the highest of all, Sophia, Goddess of wisdom.

Blessed be!

Yule: Winter Solstice (December 21)

Theme: Rebirth of the sun. We celebrate the birth of the Sun Goddess, Lucina. The altar is set in the eastern part of the circle. Decorations include pine bows, mistletoe, holly, ivy. The Mother Goddess image has two red candles on each side. The witches are wearing evergreen crowns with lit white candles. This symbolizes the Sun Goddess dispersing the darkness, all purified and consecrated. Then there is a period of humming that builds up to a birth scream. It is good to let those sounds come out of us because we are reborn along with Lucina.

When the energy is high enough, the High Priestess says:

*All ye assembled at my shrine,
Mother darksome and divine,
Mine is the scourge and mine the kiss.
Here I charge you in this sign.*

The HP kisses the woman to her left on the forehead, the eyes, and the lips. The kiss is passed on from woman to woman, from east to west. When this is completed, the HP in the Goddess position says:

*All ye assembled in sight,
bow before my spirit bright.*

All bow to the east. The High Priestess says:

*Aphrodite, Arionhod,
Lover of the Horned God,
Mighty Queen of Witchery and Night,*

Morgan, Etoine, Nisene,
 Diana, Bridgid, Melusine,
 Am I named of old by men.
 Artemis and Cerridwen,
 Hell's dark mistress, Heaven's queen.
 Ye who would ask of me a rune,
 Or who would ask of me a boon,
 Meet me in some secret glade,
 Dance my round in greenwood shade,
 By the light of the full moon.
 In a place, wild and lone,
 Dance about mine altar stone;
 Work my holy mystery.
 Ye who are feign to sorcery,
 I bring ye secrets yet unknown.
 No more shall ye know slavery,
 Who give true worship unto me.
 Ye who tread my round on Sabbath night,
 Come ye all naked to the rite,
 In token that ye be really free.
 I teach ye the mystery of rebirth,
 Work ye my mysteries in mirth.
 Heart joined to heart and lip to lip,
 Five are the points of fellowship,
 That bring ye ecstasy on earth,
 For I am the circle of rebirth.
 I ask no sacrifice, but do bow,
 No other law but love I know.
 By naught but love may I be known.
 All things living are mine own,
 From me they come, to me they go.

—Sybil Leek

The cauldron is lit and all are silent so that the Goddess may reveal Herself to Her women. Omens include the screeching of an owl, appearances of deer, shooting stars, sudden wakening of the wind, curious cloud formations of crescents, baying of horses or donkeys, hisses of serpents, and appearances of ravens.

The High Priestess, when she feels it is time (intuitively), says:

Queen of the Moon,
 Queen of the Stars,
 Queen of the Horns,
 Queen of the Fires,
 Queen of the Earth,

*Bring to us the Child of Promise!
For it is the Great Mother
Who gives birth to the new year.
Darkness and tears are set aside,
When the Sun comes up again.
Golden Sun of hill and mountain,
Illumine the world,
Illumine the seas,
Illumine the rivers,
Illumine us all.
Grief be laid and joy be raised,
Blessed by the Great Mother!
Without beginning, without end,
Everlasting to Eternity.
Evoe! lo! Evoe! lo!*

—Sybil Leek

The women then jump over the fire in the cauldron, making a wish for the new year, saying it as they leap. After each jump, the women seal it by saying, "blessed be!"

A toast to the Goddess follows with the usual feasting, dancing, meeting dance, and merriment. The circle is closed with thanks given to the watchers who attended and a final blessing.

DEEP PEACE

*Deep peace of the Running Wave to you;
Deep peace of the Flowing Air to you;
Deep peace of the Quiet Earth to you;
Deep peace of the Shining Stars to you.*

—Chris Carol

Candlemas: February 2

Theme: The celebration of the waxing light. It is the high point between Winter Solstice and Vernal Equinox. The waxing light of the soul is understood here; it is a major Sabbat to initiate new witches.

The altar is set up at the north of the circle. Candle colors are pure white. The cauldron is placed in the middle with sacred herbs or weeds: rowan, apple, elder, holly, pine, cedar, juniper, poplar, dogwood.

Cast the circle as usual, admitting the eldest first, youngest last. The High Priestess purifies the circle, consecrating it with fire (incense). The four corners of the universe are invoked with the appropriate Goddess, unified to raise power.

Holy Priestess:

In the olden times, the Goddess had many groves and women served her freely and lived in dignity. The goddess's presence was everywhere, and her women knew her as the eternal siser. The patriarchal powers burned down her sacred groves, raped and killed her priestesses, and enslaved women. Her name was stricken from library books, and great darkness of ignorance descended upon womankind.

Today, there is a new dawn. We are welcoming new witches into our coven as we strive to replant the Goddess's groves. We, the women, are the grove; through us the return of the Goddess is evident. Let us give birth to each other spiritually just as the Goddess brought forth the light of the world.!" Behold the great Goddess of the ten thousand names! Blessed be!

Challenger sister priestess asks:

Who are the new souls seeking the Goddess?

The new initiates reveal themselves:

It is I.

Challenger sister:

Who vouches for you?

The new initiate sister then names the coven member who vouches for her. This continues around the circle with each new woman. When the challenger sister is satisfied with the answers, she announces:

It is well! We shall bless your path, if you know the password.

SILVER WHEEL

1. *As I rode out one frosty night
Silver wheel a'turning, turning,
I met a Lady dressed in white;
Silver wheel a'turning, turning,
Ah . . .
Ah . . .*

All 2. *Her breath was ice, her steed like snow;
On silver wheels did her chariot go.*

- Challenger 3. *What brings you to this sacred place;
Will you gaze upon my face?*
- Initiate 4. *I seek the Source of rainbow light,
Which floods the sky this moonless night.*
- C. 5. *I am whom you seek, fair one;
Now the mystery is begun.*
- I. 7. *The fivefold blessing be my shield
Against all ill my enemy wield.*
- All 8. *You shall hex and you shall heal;
Curse and bless with salve and wheal.*
- C. 9. *Power comes even to the fool;
Know you now the wise ones' rule?*
- I. 10. *And I harm none with my skill
I may do as I may will.*
- C. 11. *Better fall upon my knife,
Than enter here in fear or strife!*
- I. 12. *Towards the circle now I move
Entering in trust and love.*
- All 13. *We shall dance and we shall play
Feast with you till break of day!*

—Chris Carol

Initiation

The initiated members stand one behind the other with legs spread apart forming a birth canal. The end of the birth canal is facing moonward. The new members line up, oldest first, youngest last. As they step toward the beginning of the birth canal, the challenger sister stops them by pointing her athalme at their breasts.

Challenger sister:

*It is better for you to rush upon my blade than to enter
with fear in your heart.*

New initiate:

I enter the circle in perfect love and perfect trust.

The challenger removes the knife from her breast, for this is the correct password.

The new initiate now lies down on her back, positioning herself head first. Slowly, the women reach down and move her little by little through the canal without her help. This is an experience one

must trust the "elders" or "mothers" to complete with their own strength. When she surfaces on the other end of the canal, the High Priestess welcomes her with a hug and kiss. The new initiate, facing the moon, says her new witch's name, if she has already found it. If not, she says her old name. All women in unison:

Blessed be! Happy birthday!

The High Priestess offers the new woman a honeycomb with honey in it. High Priestess:

*Taste the sweetness of Isis; may her blessings guide you
always.*

After tasting the honey, the new woman becomes the last link of the birth canal, helping to give birth to the rest of the new souls.

This ritual needs a certain strength, but is also exhilarating and joyous, not a solemn ritual.

After the initiation, the circle is formed and power is raised as usual with everyone making sounds with their bodies. When it is time, the High Priestess begins the witch's chant.

The Witch's Chant

*Darksome night and shining Moon,
Harken to the witches' rune.
East and South and West and North,
Hear! Come! I call Thee forth!*

*By all the powers of land and sea,
Be obedient unto me.
Wand and Pentacle and Sword,
Harken ye unto my word.*

*Cord and Censer, Scourge and Knife,
Waken all ye into life.
Powers of all the Witches' Blade,
Come ye as the charge is made.*

*Queen of Heaven, Queen of Hell,
Send your aid unto my spell.
Horned Huntress of the night,
Work my will by magic rite.*

*By all the powers of land and sea,
As I do say, "so mote it be."
By all the might of Moon and Sun,
As I do will, it shall be done.*

Blessed be!

After the chant, the High Priestess, in the Goddess position facing east, says:

Eternal sister of all beginnings, Ea, Diana, Isis, Tiamat, Astarte, Ashtorah, Adame, thou art the beginning and the end. Without your blessings there is no life. Touch us with your wisdom and make this grove grow like the sacred groves of olden times. We dedicate ourselves to you, knowing the mystery that what is not found within you will never be found without.

All meditate silently upon the divine woman soul.

The High Priestess pours the chalice, offering it to the Goddess:

Here is to your joyous return, may our presence please you!

The chalice is then passed sunwise (clockwise) as each woman expresses herself with thanks and wishes to the Goddess. The cauldron is kindled; feast foods are blessed and passed. Good times, dancing, and music-making follow.

After a while, the High Priestess forms the circle of power and gives thanks to the four corners of the universe for attending, and asks for blessings before the spirits depart.

Celebration continues until dawn.

Spring Equinox: March 21

Theme: The return of Persephone from the underworld to reunite with her mother, Demeter. This is the holy day of the continuation between mothers and daughters, the life force perpetuating and rejuvenating all in nature.

Green candles are used, symbolizing the green flora that has appeared again above the earth. Two silver candles are placed on the altar, symbolizing the maiden aspect of the Goddess who rules this part of the year.

Proper preparation: grounds and circle cast, purified with water; admittance in order of age; consecration with fire; corners of the universe evoked; and unifying as usual.

High Priestess:

We invoke thee, oh Persephone, Kore, Diana, Artemis, the ever young maiden, and Flora, the new life that is all around us. We invoke thee by root, by stem and by bud, by leaf and by blossom. We invoke thee by seed, by life to transfuse our lives and souls with thy fresh energy. As you

have risen from the ground, so shall your sisters, we who call upon thee. As you have united with your joyous mother Demeter, so shall we unite with our mothers while in life, and close the gaps of socialization that separate us. Hail to thee, maiden, unconquerable and ever young life force. Bless thy sisters who call upon your guidance for sisterhood. Make our hearts fill with love for one another, for our sisters and mothers and offspring. So mote it be!

The High Priestess pours wine into the chalice, pours libation and drinks. She passes the chalice afterward, saying:

*Ten thousand years I have been sleeping
and now I am being awakened.
My heavy eyelashes are the woods;
They are beckoning.
My heart, the clouds are surprised
because they are calling me, calling me.
My earth body is bedecked
with a thousand flowers,
Many breasts of mine,
the mountains joyfully rearing their tips,
They are calling! They are calling!
I want to embrace all the sad and the lost.
All wrongs my hands shall doom to death.
I am the defender of every woman
As I am the defender of my holy self.
Earthmother I am, the Only One;
Everything sprang from me;
I carry the seed of all creation;
I am the bestower of life alone.
Oh, oh, oh, I am awake!
Oh, I am answering the call . . .*

—Masika Szilágyi

The first round is to toast the rejuvenated Goddess; the second round is to ask the Goddess to bless the new projects in the women's lives, be it relationships or activities. Food is blessed and shared, followed by the meeting dance and sisterhood merriment.

The circle is closed.

DEMETER'S LAMENT

*A mother roves throughout the land,
Searching for her daughter.
The Earth laid waste, no plant at hand,
She mourns o'er earth and water,
Ah . . . she mourns o'er earth and water.*

*Where is the girl, both brave and strong,
Belonged to Sappho's band;
Who loved to dance and swelled with song
On Lesbos' golden sand?*

*The laughter left my graceful girl
Since matriarchy fell;
Seduced by flowers to an underworld
She lives in man-made hell.*

*I put my ear close to the earth
And hear the signing sound
Of her who's tied to me by birth
Now captive underground.*

*But now I know where she is hid,
I'll not delay one hour
Until from bonds my daughter's rid
By our own women's power!*

*This pomegranate that we share
Is like our common heart;
And fruit we ate in slavery's snare
Shall not keep us apart!*

—Chris Carol

May Eve: April 30

Theme: The maiden Goddess comes of age. Flora is now in flower and trees, fruits, crops, and animals are fertile. Our Lady of May grants rebirth to the world.

The altar is wreathed in flowers. Women wear crowns of bright blossoms. Branches of trees are held; the cauldron is filled with good-smelling herbs. This is a holy day sacred to Brigid, the fairy queen.

The circle is cast. All is purified and consecrated, admitted, the corners of the universe invoked. Unified.

High Priestess:

*All ye assembled at my shrine
Mother darksome and divine
Mine is the scourge and mine the kiss.
Here I charge you in this sign.*

She kisses the woman five times on the forehead, eyes, lips, breasts, and genitals. The kiss is passed around the circle from east to south to west to north. (Optional if you are shy.)

High Priestess:

*All ye assembled in my sight,
Bow before my spirit bright!*

All bow. High Priestess:

*Hear ye the words of the Star Goddess
The dust of whose feet are the hosts of heaven,
She whose body encircles the universe:*

*I am the beauty of the green earth
And the white moon among the stars
And the mystery of the waters
And the desire of human hearts.*

*Call unto your soul: Arise and come unto me
For I am the soul of nature who gives
Life to the universe.
From me all things proceed
And unto me all things must return.*

*Before my face, beloved of all,
Let your divine innermost self be enfolded
In the rapture of the infinite.
Let my worship be in the heart that rejoices
For behold, all acts of love and pleasure
Are my rituals.
And therefore let there be beauty and strength
Power and compassion, honor and pride
Mirth and reverence within you.*

*And you who think to seek for me
Know your seeking and yearning shall avail you not
Unless you know the mystery:
That if that which you seek you find not within you,
You will never find it without.*

*For behold, I have been with you from the beginning
And I am that which is attained at the end of desire.*

A period of silence is followed to contemplate the Goddess's presence. When the time is right, all bless the food and drink on the altar and fill the chalice full. The High Priestess offers proper libation by pouring some wine on the earth.

High Priestess:

Eternal sister of life, bless our year with wisdom and understanding, replenish our energies, remove all obstacles that separate sisters from each other. So mote it be! Blessed be!

Each woman toasts the Goddess of May, who stands for flowering womanhood. It is unlucky to marry in this month because she is still a maiden goddess. But dancing is very pleasing to her, especially using the tree branches that the women have brought.

Close the circle with thanks to the Goddess. Feast. Party.

QUEEN OF THE MAY

*I crown thee Queen of the May;
Put on thy cloak of green;
With every bush in bright array,
Appear as Heaven's Queen!*

*I crown thee Queen of the May;
Put on thy floral crown;
Inspire each song with joy and mirth
And banish every frown!*

*I crown thee Queen of the May;
Take up thy hawthorn stake
And pierce the lies of those who would
Our women's freedom take!*

*I crown thee Queen of the May;
Display thy whitened face;
With terror strike the hearts of those
Who women would disgrace!*

*I crown thee Queen of the May;
Hold high thy ribboned pole;
Inspire the dance with earthly joys
And thrill each woman's soul!*

*I crown thee Queen of the May;
Gaze in the dew-pond still;
And as thou seest thy true love there
Do with her what thou will!*

*I crown thee Queen of the May;
When all is rightly seen
Each maiden fair assembled here
Appears as Heaven's Queen!*

—Chris Carol

Midsummer Night: Summer Solstice, June 21

Theme: This festival is sacred to the fire queen of love, Heartha, Vesta, Rhea, Artemis, Calliste, and Arianhod. On this day we celebrate the Goddess's power over men.

Those witches who relate to men bring a lock of men's hair to be placed in the cauldron. Others take a strand of their own hair as a symbol of their personal homage to the fire Goddess. On the mountaintops in Europe, people still build roaring fires from old car tires to her. A wheel is placed in the circle, covered with flowers, symbolizing the turning of the year.

The circle is cast with stones. The cauldron plays the major role here, so it is decorated with flowers and placed at the southern part of the circle. All are wearing summer flowers. Purify with water, consecrate with fire, admit in order of age, invoke the corners (using wands, not knives), mark the circle with the wand, and unify by humming.

High Priestess:

*All ye assembled at my shrine
Mother darksome and divine
Mine is the scourge and mine the kiss
Here I charge you in this sign.*

High Priestess:

*All ye assembled in sight
bow before my spirit bright.*

All bow. High Priestess:

The fire festival has begun. This is the day when the goddess reigns supreme. At this time in particular, she has power over her horned consort. In commemoration of this, I bid you honor her by placing in her sacred fire an oak branch that represents the male principle.

This is a great opportunity to cast spells over men who have bothered you this year. It can be anyone from political enemies to personal enemies. Rapists, for example, can be sacrificed with great success on this night. Each woman approaches the cauldron and places her oak branch in it, saying which man it represents. This may also be a blessing on sons and lovers, or just a love spell.

After this is done, the women begin dancing clockwise around the cauldron. Bring instruments or recorded music. We use ritual music from Africa.

When all are tired, gather again into a circle and unify. High Priestess:

Passionate sister of the living fire, accept our love. Great Rhea, Mother of all living, turn the wheel of fortune to the betterment of women and their liberation. You alone have power over patriarchy in this time of oppression. I invoke thee and call upon thee, oh mighty Mother of us all, bringer of justice, fruitfulness! I invoke thee by the vestal fires in our cauldron, by the passion in our hearts, by the intense flames of the pyres that burned your witches not long ago. Descend upon our enemies in your fury. Avenge the wrongs, halt the rapes, illuminate the minds of our leaders and judges with your eternal fire. So mote it be!

All watch the burning fires for clues, pictures, or prophecies. After awhile, bless all food and drink.

Feast and praise the name Rhea, Vesta, Esmeralda, woman passion. Dance. Party.

Close the circle as usual.

FLAMES OF LOVE

*Drink the wine, chew the laurel,
Sing of love and never quarrel;
Wake, to die of pleasure's pain
In flames of ecstasy again!*

—Chris Carol

The Lammas: August 2

Theme: Celebration of Habondia, the Goddess of plenty, of fortune, the Goddess of good fortune, the Indian corn mothers, Kore and Ceres, the daughters of the Earth Mother; from here comes all plenty.

The circle is created as usual: purification, consecration, admission, raising power, and the fivefold kiss. The altar is dressed with fruits of the earth, flowers, and grapes. Candles are green for material gain. Sheaves of wheat are placed on the four sides. Branches of holly or any grain can be used for crowns.

High Priestess:

I _____(name), your High Priestess and Witch, hereby invoke thee, O loving Aradia, teacher of the oppressed,

protectress of women. I invoke thee by your holy Mother's name, Diana, mother of all that is alive. Great is the Mother who created the universe, who created the waters, the fires, the earth, and the air. I summon thee, Diana, lovely huntress of the night, to descend upon this gathering of women who came together to commune with you.

More power is raised. Everyone listens for the inner voice of Diana, and whoever feels her presence shares it with the others.

High Priestess:

The harvest season is coming; the harvest of foods of our labors, of our struggles. This is the height of the year. Great Fortune, smile upon your sisters! May the bounty of this season keep us strong in spirit, body, and soul.

Offering of the chalice after libation:

Great Goddess of life and good fortune, accept our thanks for our own growth, insights, accomplishments, and the sustaining food you have given us.

The chalice is passed. Women offer a toast to the Goddess. Food is set aside for her place, which no one touches. The rest of the food is blessed and shared in joyous feasting.

Music is played during and after the feast. Individuals perform their spiritual contributions, be it poetry or playing an instrument or a song, to making the feasting worthy of the Goddess's company. The Goddess hates boring circles.

Close the circle before the last ounce of energy is gone. The last part can always be done by wands as well as swords. Don't forget to thank the spirits.

SONG OF THE CORN MAIDEN

*There's plenty to eat, plenty to drink,
Plenty to keep us toasty warm
Plenty to clean, plenty to heal,
Plenty to keep us from harm;
The power is ours to work and share
Our Mother's Plenty everywhere!*

*There's plenty to say, plenty to sing,
Plenty to dance and dare to do;
Plenty to weave, plenty to unwind,
Plenty for me and you!*

*There's plenty of work, plenty of play,
Plenty of rest when day is done;
Plenty of corn in the Maiden's hands,
Plenty for everyone!*

—Chris Carol

Autumn Equinox: September 21

Theme: Witches' Thanksgiving.

The altar is decorated with pine cones, oak sprigs, acorns, ears of corn, dried leaves, and hazel branches. Candles are brown and green. The circle is created as usual; all procedures are as usual, including the fivefold kiss. After the energy is raised, the High Priestess turns to the west in the Goddess position.

High Priestess:

Farewell, Goddess Lucina, ever-returning light! You ripened the grapes and fruits and nuts of the earth. We thank thee; great is the Mother who made our lives ripen with experience and wisdom. This is the season in which the wise hazelnut teaches us contained knowledge. In the seed is hidden the new life, which Demeter will free once it returns to the sacred earth.

She plants the seed into the earth. All:

Blessed be! May new life be sent from the land of youth!

High Priestess (offering the chalice to the Goddess):

Eternal Mother, without beginning and without end, accept our libation to you for your love and teachings. Indeed, you are the soul of nature, and all that is belongs to you. Accept our souls. We dedicate ourselves to you!

The chalice makes the round for the toasting to the Goddess.

All bless the food and drink and feast in her honor. Dancing follows; close the circle.

High Priestess:

Sisters, I propose a toast to the good seasons that have gone, to the seasons yet to come!

All: *Blessed be!*

High Priestess:

Sisters, I propose a toast to the beauty of women, to the beauty of the crone!

All: *Blessed be!*

High Priestess:

Sisters, I propose a toast to the Goddess who is three-formed; may she bring freedom to women all over the world!

All: *Blessed be!*

HARVEST HOME!

*Harvest Home, my friends,
O bring the harvest in!
Gone the summer haze,
the frost will soon begin.
Harvest Moon will grant a boon,
and turn the night to day,
Harvest Home, my friends,
O sing the hours away!*

*Harvest Home, my friends,
O reap the stalks of grain,
Life lies in the seed,
'til spring shall come again.
Golden leaves and golden sheaves
do glow by light of moon;
Harvest Home, my friends,
for winter's coming soon!*

*Harvest Home, my friends,
O work until we're done;
Soon comes rest to all
who labor 'neath the sun.
Fill right up the Vintage cup,
and toast the new made wine;
Harvest Home, my friends,
for 'tis the Harvest Time!*

—Chris Carol

Hallowmas: October 31 (Women's New Year)

Theme: The Goddess displays her third aspect as the destroyer of life. As the sacred hag, she represents nature in winter—a death, which is organically important for future life. On this day, she returns to her sisters to give the wisdom of the ages, to protect, to avenge.

The circle is formed as usual. All is properly purified and consecrated and each woman is admitted to the circle with the password. Energy is raised. All unify.

This is the time of Hecate, the time of ancestral worship, the time for witches to draw near the Goddess who speaks directly to her children this night. In Europe, people go to the cemeteries with bouquets of chrysanthemums, honoring the dead. The Susan B. Anthony Coven always remembers the witches burned by the Christians this night. This is also the night of the revengeful Mother, who is the fierce protector of her sisters when aroused. If you have a blacklist of women's enemies, the score can be settled tonight.

The altar has two black candles and two white ones. Each woman is represented with one red candle on the outside circle and one red candle on the altar. Offerings of food are appropriate. All kinds of food with red colorings are used, because that is the food that belongs to the dead. We often use pomegranates and red apples.

High Priestess:

Oh Hecate, Goddess of life and death, beloved by us all, wake up from your slumber, Earth Mother. Bless this gathering of your sisters who are present here tonight. Let this all holy Sabbat proceed in mirth, in understanding, in love and ecstasy.

All: *Blessed be, Great Goddess!*

This text came to us from ancient times, recited by matriarchies of old. Let us listen to their visions of the Goddess Hecate.

High Priestess:

Lady of tremblings, the sovereign lady, the mistress of destruction who sets the world in order, she who delivers from destruction, lady of heaven, the mistress of the world who devours with fire.

Lady of the altar, the lady to whom abundant offerings are made. She who prevails with knives, the mistress of the world, destroyer of the foes of the women, who makes the decree for escape of the needy from evil happenings.

Fire, the lady of flames who inhales the supplications that are made to her, who permitted no man to enter at her shrines.

Lady of light, she who is in front, the lady of strength, quiet of heart who gave birth to all that is alive, whose girth is three hundred and fifty measures. The likes of her has never been found from the beginning.

*Lady of might, who dances upon the blood-red ones,
who keeps the festival of Hecate on the day of the hearing of
faults.*

*Terrible one, lady of rainstorm, who plants the ruina-
tion of the souls of men, devourer of dead bodies; the
orderer and producer and creator of the slaughtered. Dis-
penser of light during her period of life, watcher of flames,
the lady of the strength and of writing. She takes posses-
sion of hearts; she has secret plots and councils.*

After this recitation, the Goddess's presence should be felt. All meditate on the meanings of the words; listen within. If business is at hand, proceed with the same energy of the terrible one.

The High Priestess gathers the witches and all thrust their knives forward. They clank them together and work them up for action. The maiden reads the names of the rapists or their descriptions. The witches requesting these must give a short rousing speech on why these men deserve the worst, in order to get everyone involved emotionally.

Take a pomegranate, name the rapists, or just "patriarchy," to cover a wide range, and chant the witches' chant over it. When the last words are spoken, the High Priestess thrusts her knife into the fruit so that it drips like blood. Do not touch a cursed pomegranate with your hands! Then each witch pronounces a curse over patriarchy as the fruit is passed from knife to knife. For example, "So shall he who hurt my sister bleed from unknown wounds!" or, "So shall his guts fall out to nobody's pain." Take inspiration from the terrible one and vent your righteous anger magically; send it where it belongs!

THE WITCHES' WARNING

Chorus:

*They're gonna come, they're gonna come;
They'll come for us in the morning.
They're gonna come, but we'll be gone;
We've heard the witches' warning!*

*They snatched away our children dear
They took away abortion;
They wiped the wildflower from the field
And covered us with poison.*

*Now childcare costs our weekly wage
We're prisoners in our homes;
The welfare barely feeds the flesh
And starves our woman's soul.*

*They cast our Goddess from the earth
Subdued with rape and burning;
But every spring the new corn sprouts
The old ways we're learning.*

*The night watch now, the daylight soon
The struggle brings the glory;
The lives we lead, the songs we sing
Will be our woman's story.*

*The sooner fight, the sooner win;
Why wait a moment longer?
Our deadliest weapon is our hope
And we are getting stronger!*

—Chris Carol

The Esbats

AN ESBAT IS A CELEBRATION of the full moon in the name of the Goddess Diana. The thirteen full moons of every calendar year are the source of the magical number 13. Esbats are usually smaller and less ritualistic than Sabbats, and they are often more solemn and meditative. There is nothing more beautiful than having an ancient celebration under the majestic full moon.

An Esbat is usually a small group of witches who have important magic work to do. The Susan B. Anthony Coven usually goes through the creation of the circle with everyone participating intimately. The gathering of the stones for the circle is only important for women who must steal into patriarchal "public" land to find the Goddess in the city. We always dismantle the altars we build in fear of being found out. If you own land, you can simply go back to your stone altars. An Esbat can be held indoors, but if at all possible, have it outside. It should be on the night of the full moon and preferably around midnight. Have the coven members meet in your grove about ten thirty PM. Sisters should bring white candles (at least two for each witch, incense (frankincense with a little mugwort, myrtle, and rose petals are good), an image of the Goddess (a figurine is fine if you can find one you really like), the chalice and some wine, a cauldron and charcoal, sea water or salt water in two containers, and a small container of earth.

When you get to the grove, each woman should gather at least two stones from the area. The largest stone should be used to mark off the outer circle. To determine the size of the circle, each woman should stand with arms outstretched, fingertips touching her neighbor's fingertips. When everyone is touching, that means the circle is the right size, and each person should put one of her stones in front of her toes. This should be done one at a time, with the person standing at the north starting first. The remaining stones are used to build an altar in the middle of the circle. Each person puts one white candle on her stone in the outer circle and one on the altar. This can be done by wedging the candle between the stones, or burning the end of the candle over the stone so that the warm wax drippings will hold it in place. The candles represent desires, requests for special blessings, and devotion to the Goddess.

Place the image of the Goddess on the altar, and light incense in front of her. At this point, some people may want to go off alone to meditate or do private spells. This is also a good time to drink some purifying wine or tea. When everyone has returned to the circle, it is time to mark off the four corners of the universe.

In the north corner, inside the outer circle, put the clump of earth; to the east put a thurible of incense; at the southern point, the cauldron; and to the west, the salt water. All magical tools, food, musical instruments, and wine should be placed around the altar now. Light the candles in the outer circle and on the altar, and light the charcoals in the cauldron. You can throw in some herbs or Vesta powder if you like. The High Priestess draws the magic circle with her wand and a sprinkling of salt, as members of the coven enter from the north corner according to age, with the oldest going first. The High Priestess blesses coven members with salt water as they approach the entrance, and everyone enters the circle in love and trust. When all have entered, the High Priestess closes the circle with her wand, and standing at the altar, says:

*Magic Lady of Light,
You bless us with your radiant presence!
Like our foremothers of many years past
We come here tonight in your honor.*

The High Priestess goes to the north point of the circle, raises her athalme to the north (while the other witches are drawing the pentagram in the air and kissing their blades), and says:

*Oh fertile, lush Goddess of the earth!
Ancient Mother, who nourishes us, who gives birth to all
things growing, may you nurture people's struggles
for liberation around the world!
May we the people gain control of the earth, may those
who try to exploit her be made powerless.
Our Mother Nature, may you bless with strength and
power our liberation from all the forces that oppress,
alienate, degrade, pervert, imprison, and attempt to
destroy us.!*

The High Priestess goes to the east, and all witches point with their athalmes.

High Priestess:

*Beautiful Lady of the winds, may we become as free as
you!*

*May we break from our oppressive bond, our ghettos,
our prisons, our alienation.*

*May you bless us with vision to see what will be in the
future.*

May you spark our womansouls, freewomen!

All witches point their athalmes to the south.

High Priestess:

*Goddess of the South, woman of passion and fire, may you
share with us your fiery spirit!*

*May you bless our struggles with passion, strength,
determination, ingenuity, and brilliance.*

*Set afire passionate solidarity among women and
oppressed people of the world!*

May you bless our victory!

All witches point their athalmes to the west.

High Priestess:

*Bright lady of the waters, untamable woman flowing with
the strength and beauty of the women's revolution!*

*You break the chains of our oppression with your force,
while lapping inside us a love and sexuality.*

*We drink of your life force and ask you to bless the eternal
solidarity and love between all women; we flow from
the same womanspirit.*

May we join together and celebrate this!

The High Priestess then stands in front of the altar and says:

*Beautiful ancient one, may you bless us with your pres-
ence! May we bathe in your light and love; may we feel you
inside and outside our bodies; may we all touch as woman-
souls.*

Now you may want to come together and put your arms around each other. You can hum, meditating on the presence of the Goddess, while the High Priestess asks her to appear in spirit. She may ask for some sign of her presence, such as the hooting of an owl or the howl of a wolf.

During this part of the Esbat, it is best to let whatever is going to happen, happen. Be joyous, or solemn, or frenzied. (Trust your feelings, your body, and your spirit.) After awhile, sit in a circle around the altar. As the chalice of sacred wine, blessed and treated with herbs, is passed around, each sister says her wish, asks for

blessings, and expresses her devotion to the Goddess. After each witch has made her wish, her sisters bless her and direct woman-energy toward that wish; they ask the Goddess to grant their sister the boon for which she has asked. As each person takes the chalice, she pours a little wine onto the earth before making her wish, so as to share the wine with the Goddess.

After this, the High Priestess raises the chalice to the altar, and spilling a little wine onto the earth, says:

*Ancient Mother who controls the winds and the tides,
beautiful Ea, fiery womansoul, we feast in your honor,
and thank you for making us your daughters, for making
us lusty, life-giving, life-loving women! Blessed be!*

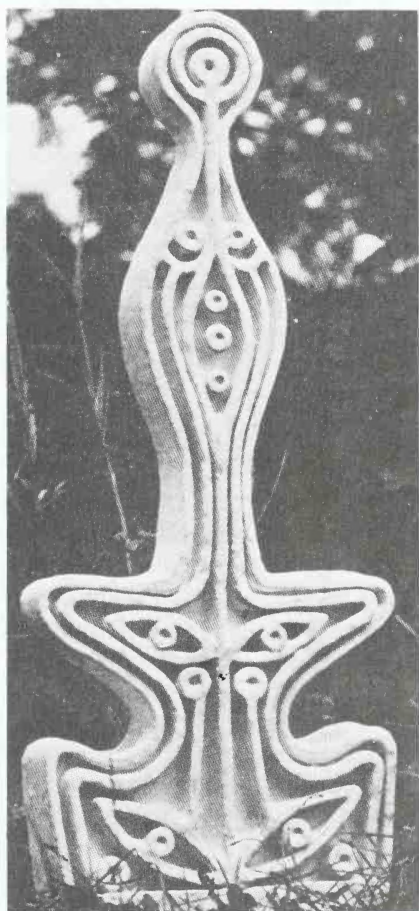
Now you can sing, dance, feast, whatever feels best and seems appropriate. Esbats have unique and differing characters, and it is best to rely on your intuition. In the patriarchal social system, "women's intuition" is derided, and we are taught to act and feel what is "socially acceptable" rather than acting on our own, genuine feelings. Witchcraft has never fit into the patriarchal system, so relax; listen to your feelings and body. Feel free and alive!

As witches, we feel righteous and proud of creating our own social system based on love, solidarity, sisterhood, and magic. We live by our own values. This is going to be our revolution, too!

THE WORDS OF THE STAR GODDESS

*I am the beauty of the green earth,
the white moon among the stars;
The mystery of the deep waters,
the desire of human heart;
Know the Mystery, therefore . . .
That if ye find not what ye seek within,
ye shall never find it without.
Lo, I have been with you from the beginning,
And I am whom ye will find
at the end of your desire.*

Dianic Tradition



Women's Festivals

THEMIS IS THE GODDESS of social instinct—of the communal or collective consciousness—and such service as She requires acts as a civilizing force. This includes community festivals, good times, purifications, and ritualistic celebrations. The civilizing influence of Themis was promoted in Goddess worship by getting the people of the community together to worship the Source of Life with life-oriented activities—sacred dances, holy feasts and fasts, festivals, and parades. Such activities allowed the people to contemplate all things larger than their immediate individual lives and to act as participants in the play of forces that essentially controlled their lives.

Matriarchal followers of Themis knew well that one's actions are controlled by one's thoughts. Thinking together communally served to create a civilized collective consciousness, directed toward the continuing health and well-being of the community. Such civilizations led long lives and dominated the social life, even into the new patriarchal culture, until suppressed. In every ethnic background, such a culture, such a civilization existed. The festivals were integral to them all.

Feralia and Lupercalia—Fertility Festival

The theme of the festival of Feralia was purification. It began on February 13, and worship was devoted to "Parentalia," the ancient ancestor. This was not a feasting time. Marriages were forbidden, temples closed, and magistrates appeared in public without their insignia. Feralia was devoted to minding the "old ones," the "more." Spirits of the dead were placated, appeased, and tended during this time.

During Lupercalia, the spirits of the dead were again a major part of the theme, although this particular festival was devoted to the stimulation of fertility as well as to purification. During Lupercalia, the ancient people would use strips of goat skins (februa) to strike the women with. This was an invitation for happy ghosts to reincarnate within the women. The world of the dead was considered active and near. Spirits of the dead being ever-present, the people felt comfortable not only invoking them, but also inducing them to return

through the cycle of rebirth. The februa served a dual purpose—purification and stimulation of fertility—expressed through placation of ghosts. This was the ancients' idea of being "pure" and blameless. The importance of these festivals is thus expressed:

*Winter rains and ruins over
And all the seasons of snows and sins,
While in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the Spring begins!*

Diasia—Ward-Off-Poverty Festival

This was a dark, gloomy, and scary festival—a time for exorcisms, magical curses, purgations, and placation for wrongs done within one's own bloodline. The festival took place on March 14 during the night when the people of the community would journey to the temple of the Big Snake Goddess, Ua Zit. There they would offer food to the Cobra Queen in order to exorcise poverty and illness from their lives.

In the Old Religion, Ua Zit was invoked and fed by pouring barley out upon the earth for the Underworld. When the Olympian Zeus Meilichos superseded these practices with his own, the takeover was never so deep and complete that the simple folk could not see it for what it was. They continued to visit the shrine of the Cobra Queen. Using offerings of piglets after the advent of the patriarchal meat-eating customs, the people continued their rites of purification, using fire to fumigate and brimstone to cure all ills. In this way, all that was sick was exorcised, and the Cobra Queen would feed the good luck of the community for another year.

Anthesteria—Blessings on Vine Festival

This is a three-day festival, the first day being dedicated to the Openings of the Casks (Pithoigia) for the broaching of the new wine. Essentially, the community got together to taste their new wine, and to pour out libations to the Earth Mother who made it all possible. As they poured, they asked that the wine be rendered harmless, since the Goddess didn't really like wine or alcohol to drink. Her animals could die from it. Pure water or juices were more favored libations of the Earth Mother. On this day of Opening the Casks, the normal patriarchal slave-master hierarchy was relaxed and a more socialistic matriarchal approach was law. "No one shall be prevented from tasting of the new wine!" Slaves and masters, parents and children, all drank together.

The second day of this festival was the Day of Cups, and drinking contests were held all over town. One tradition called for someone to drain the garlanded cup to win a cake of great good luck. Cups being a pleasure symbol, it is no wonder that the Sacred Marriage was staged on this day. During this "Hieros Gamos," a sexual union took place between the representative of the Goddess and Her sacred king. The temples of the earthborn Dionysus were opened so that the community could, for the only time all year, witness this sacred union. If this involved the actual queen of a country, there was a "displaying" of her pleasure, which was the best omen for her people in the coming year.

The third day of Anthesteria was the Festival of the Pots, a celebration of the food for the people. Pots were newly purchased, blessed by priestesses, and a great meal then cooked in them for the first time—to feed the hunger that the Day of Cups had worked up. General disorganization ruled this day, too, and no work was done other than feeding the community.

When all three days had passed, it was time for the serious part of Anthesteria to be observed, around midnight, in each home. Here the head of the house, mother of the family, would stand barefoot in the middle of the home. First, she would make a special sign with her hand, the sign of the Yoni—making the shape of a diamond with thumbs and index fingers touching and the rest held straight out next to each other. Then she would wash her hands in clear spring water three times, then turn around three times, each time putting nine black beans into her mouth. Through the special sign she had made with her hands she would spit the beans, calling out: "These I send forth! With these beans I redeem myself and mine!"

Nine times the mother would spit nine beans for the Mother Goddess, saying this each time. After the beans had all been spit out, she would avert her eyes and turn away so that the ghosts (or their essences) could pick the beans up. Then the mother would wash her hands again with water, and striking a brass bell nine times, would say after each strike, "Shades of my ancestors, depart!" The rite was finished.

Since, in essence, this is a mutual All Hallows custom, this rite may be observed at Halloween, or in May when the Goddess is still in Her Death-in-Life aspect. Different places in the world with different climates should decide when this gentle exorcism of the old spirits is appropriate.

Thargelia—Festival of First Fruits

A harvest festival for northern cultures would be held in September, but in the early days of southern Europe and Asia Minor, as

now, harvest begins with festivals in May or June. The first of three such early harvesting festivals was the Thargelia.

*The road on which our feet are set
Is in a harvest way,
For to the fair-robed Demeter
Our comrades bring today
The first fruits of their harvesting
She on the threshing place
Great store of barley grain outpoured
For guardian of Her Grace.
—Theocritus, "Idylls"*

It was considered very bad luck to ignore or even forget the importance of the "first fruits" because famine could come to the people or a wild boar waste the land. The ancients were very careful to be grateful for the source of their life—food. They would take their first fruits to the temple of Demeter as an offering, and pour everything out in front of the Goddess image. This food was then gathered and used by the priestesses of the temple. This was quite sensible to the pagans. In remembering the good grace of the Goddess, the community fed Her temple workers, the Priestesshood.

A good luck charm for the community was an important part of Thargelia. This charm was made by the boys and nymphs whose parents were living, and consisted of a decorated olive branch known as "Eiresione." From this branch, the youth hung all manner of natural products: sacred wool from first-shorn sheep, dyed white and purple; strings of acorns; vessels of wine; figs, dates, and barley cakes. This charm was fastened over the door to the home as a charm against pestilence and famine in the coming year.

*Eiresione brings all good things;
Figs and fat cakes to eat,
Soft oil and honey sweet,
And brimming wine cup deep
That She may drink and sleep.*

Because the branch was olive, we may safely assume this was a dedication to Athena, the Virgin. In other places, this would be done in honor of Artemis, Soul of Nature.

Although later patriarchs (Aristotle is an example) told of pagan "sacrifices" during Goddess-worship times, there was usually a taboo on the killing of animals. Even the Olympians periodically bowed to this custom, so steeped in tradition and wisdom. Such a period of taboo on killing allowed the wild animals and livestock to grow and multiply. The original pagan form of offering was to sprinkle grains and water on the altar before a ritual was performed.

*As we cast up our barley in little showers
A little grace from the birds is ours.*

The harvest feast was prepared from pelanos, or barley meal, with cheese and leeks and chopped olives. Variations were also used, however, as evidenced by the following:

*A holy heifer's milk, white and fair to drink
Bright honey drops from flowers, bee-distilled
With draughts of water from a virgin fount
And from the ancient vine its mother wild
An unmixed draught this gladness and fair fruit
Of gleaming olive, ever-blooming
And woven flowers, children of Mother Earth.*

During Thargelia, it was important to include musical offerings to the Goddess. Music festivals were held during this time, and winners of contests received special tripods—used in divination—for them to sit upon while creating. The festival of Thargelia gave rest and relaxation, as well as a communal spirit, to the people, and usually featured a procession of townspeople, moving through the streets with their first fruits (wild herbs, ground pulse, acorns, barley, wheat, dried fig cakes, barley cakes, and pots full of good food). As they passed each door to a home they would hang the sacred good luck charm (Eiresione) over the entrance.

Pharmakos

Actually still a part of Thargelia, the ceremony of Pharmakos was one of ritualistic purification and stimulation. Two men were chosen to represent all that was not well in the community. Usually these men were criminals, taken from imprisonment and seen as representatives of the Male Principle of the Universe. As Pan, these men were struck with leeks and fruitless branches, or pelted with onions. This beating took place seven times for good luck, then the criminals were led out of the community, never to return under penalty of death. This expulsion served to purify the city and was so important that only special and magical people, specially purified, could perform the ritual, usually to the sound of flutes.

It was said that this beating of Pan served to drive out evil influences as well as to make him more virile. Onions (garlic, too) were considered aphrodisiacs, and the beating was done by the worshippers of Pan as represented by one of Pan's priests. Considered in this way, the Pharmakos fits nicely into Thargelia, without any taste of blood.

This ceremony was well liked by the new patriarchy, whose leaders took the ritual further. After the Pharmakos were "led out" of (expelled from) the city, the patriarchs burned them on a pyre of fruitless trees, then scattered their ashes to the four directions. This was a patriarchal touch—a blending of the gentle exorcism and stimulation of the matriarchal mode with the patriarchal perversion of human sacrifice. Because of this, however, the festival of Thargelia, with the attendant ceremony of Pharmakos, survived deep into patriarchal, fifth-century Athens.

There is a female Pharmakos, "Charila." When there is famine and drought in the land, a festival is held in honor of Charila (Kore), the Maid-Virgin. Before offering first fruits to Her, an effigy or priestess-representative is pelted in the face with satin strips. Afterward, normal Thargelian activities begin. This custom can be recognized in Italian weddings, where the groom and bride have leather shoes thrown at them before they are showered with rice. The purpose is the same—to drive away the evil influences first, then shower the blessings afterward.

The nature of "sacrifice," as stated earlier, was dependent upon the times and political winds of the ancients. In the beginning, there were only fireless and wineless sacrifices, as in the sprinkling of the grains over the altars of the Old Ones (Venerable Ones). No animal sacrifice was allowed. With the advent of patriarchal hordes pressing down from the north, this new flesh-sacrificing feature was accommodated with the building of a new altar for the Olympians, the Indo-European, militaristic, hero-god-worshippers. Modestly, the altars of the Goddess were preserved behind the new ones and continued to be filled with honey cakes and first fruits of offerings.

"Up to the hill they came, yet in their hand, no seed of burning flame, and for the Rhodian land with fireless rite, the grove upon the citadel they light." Pindar said this in observance of his local customs of priestesses worshipping the pre-Hellenic Great Goddess, Athena.

Kallynteria and Plynteria—Nurturance Festival

These festivals (May 19 and May 28) were designed to encourage a communal "gloom" attitude, as ill-omen festivals that were solemnized rather than celebrated. On the sixth day of the third part of Thargelia, very secret Goddess rites were solemnized and the gloom was taken very seriously. Priestesses would carry the sacred image from the temples to the waters (oceans, lakes, rivers, streams) and bathe Her. This ritual washing united the sacred image with the life-giving waters. Often the priestesses would shroud the holy image, or perhaps rope off the holy temple entirely.

During Plynteria, Pallas Athena was taken down and out of Her temples to be bathed and beautified by new paint or the addition of new jewels. This practice extended into the individual homes, where all personal shrines and altars were cleaned and renewed, as was the rest of the house. A thorough sweeping out with the old and in with the new was in order. These festivals took place in May, held to be unlucky for marriages because of the association with the maiden-virgin aspect of the Goddess.

Vestalia—Fire Festival

Vestalia, another large purification festival, was celebrated on June 7 by the Virgin and dedicated to the Fire Goddess, Vesta. On Vestalia, priestesses traveled to the rivers to throw small images of men into the waters while standing on a wooden bridge. The images were made of rushes and called "argeioi." The practice was a response to the Oracle:

*Ye nations, throw two bodies in sacrifice to the Ancient
Ones who bear the sickle, bodies to be received by the
Tuscan streams.*

Priestesses remained unadorned and in old clothes until the ban was lifted on midsummer night. Eternal fires, kept in the temples for Vesta, were renewed at this time, and the people took some of the fire home with them as a symbol of good fortune and blessings.

The temples also received vigorous attention during Vestalia. Priestesses swept and scrubbed and washed and beautified the House of the Mother. During the festival, the innermost sacred space of the temple was opened to all priestesses. This was a space where no man was ever allowed to set foot. Here the priestesses would crowd together, standing barefoot, for prayers and rituals concerning their own order.

Vestals prepared the first cakes of the first-fruits corn and offered them in the temples, while all millers and bakers were garlanded. There are parallel customs to Vestalia among the Creek Indians of North America, usually in July and August, when their first corn is ripe. They, too, maintain the ritual purifications: bathing of sacred images; sweeping of public plazas, temples, and houses; fasting before partaking of the new first fruits; putting out the old fire and rekindling a new one; and solemnly and communally eating of the first fruits of new corn.

Arretophoria—Nymph Festival

This was also known as a "trust" festival, and was a very charming ritual of trust, responsibility, and friendship. Held in June or July, this festival was devoted to maidens and culminated in a feast of Athena. Two young maidens (ages seven to eleven) were chosen each year by the priestesshood to perform the sacred "trust." These maidens lived near the temple, wore white robes with golden trim and golden jewels, and ate a special diet of honey cakes baked and served by the community. Prior to the actual festival, the chosen two would be given a variety of tasks to do in and around the temple.

The "trust" ritual is neither long nor elaborate. At the appropriate time, the priestess of Athena would give each maiden a box or sack of sacred, holy items (sacra). No one except the High Priestess knew what the two boxes contained, and the maidens were charged to carry the boxes to a sacred place, deep within the earth. Although this meant a long, dark walk into the depths of some underground cave, the two young women were to carry the sacra down into the chambers on their heads, leave the boxes there, and return to the priestess with the sacred items left there the year before, during Arretophoria. To open any container of sacra was forbidden, even though the maidens were young and inquisitive.

Maidens who accomplished such service were returned to their communities with honors and initiated as Maids of Athena. Maiden services, however, were performed for Demeter, Kore, Themis, Proserpine, and Hersophoroi, as well as Athena. The meanings relative to this festival summed up the place of young women within the society. They had magical powers, were carriers of sacred objects, and were obedient—defying fear to descend into the depths alone—in service to their communities.

Thesmophoria—Festival of Women's Rights

Also known as the Festival of Demeter, Thesmophoria (October 11-13) is a major holy day, dedicated to the observance of the Laws of Demeter, the Goddess. Theocritus reported: "It was law among the Athenians that they should celebrate the Thesmophoria yearly, and the Thesmophoria is this: Women who are virgins and have lived a holy life, on the day of the feast place certain customary and holy books on their heads and, as though to perform a liturgy, they go to Eleusias."

The origins of Thesmophoria are very ancient. In fact, it is here we find the roots of magic, blessings, curses, pronouncements, and the beginnings of law-binding. The moral convictions of the communities were pronounced, and all enemies of the people were cursed. This took place in front of the doors of appropriate temples of the Goddesses, especially Demeter and Artemis. Aristophanes recorded the words of a woman performing Thesmophoria:

*I bid you pray to Gods and Goddesses
That in Olympus and in Pytho dwell
And Delos and to all other gods . . .
If any plots against the cause of Woman or Peace . . .
Or plots of Tyranny,
Or if female slave in her master's ear tells tales,
Or male or female Publican
Scants the full measure of our legal pint,
Curse him that he may miserable perish,
He and his house.
But for the rest of you
Pray that the gods give you all good things.*

This is a powerful, sobering curse, reinforced by custom. With both sexes participating, it was much more effective than lawsuits eventually brought to any male-dominated court.

This was a time when matriarchal practices were reinstituted and the people were reminded of the rights of women. This was also a time for the taking of the Great Oath by all who sought to vindicate themselves of certain actions.

When Callipus was conspiring against Dion (according to Plutarch), the wife and sister of Dion became suspicious and demanded that Callipus take this Great Oath to vindicate himself. The procedure was this: The man who takes the Great Oath must go to the temples of the Thesmophoroi and, after a ceremony with the priestesses, takes a burning torch and denies the charges against him. He then puts on a purple robe in dedication to the Goddess of Death, just in case he lied. This would cause great physiological as well as psychological strain upon any man attempting to lie to the priestesses of Demeter. It is said that no man survived the consequences.

On the first day of Thesmophoria, there was a ritual known as "kathodos," or a "down-going and up-rising." The priestesses for this day's celebration were women who had been purified and who had avoided the touching of any iron objects for three full days. These women acted as the "drawers-up." They dressed in crimson and purple gowns and their service was to descend deep into the cleft of the earth where the shrine of Demeter stood.

These priestesses carried piglets, considered sacred to Demeter

because of their intelligence and the fact that they love earth best. The staple food of the people, therefore, was symbolically returned to the Goddess—the source of all food. The priestesses collected from the shrine in the earth some remains of piglets left there the year before, then replaced the sacred Goddess-images, snake statues, and homemade shrines. This task was not an easy one. There were usually many snakes kept around the shrines, and around the shrines of Demeter in particular, since the snake is earth born. The women often had rattles with them, which they shook to keep the snakes away while they were “drawing-up” the offerings of the past year.

The second day of Thesmophoria, Nestia, was dedicated to Demeter the Law Giver, who ordained that “men provide with their own labors their own nurturance.” This was an acknowledgment of the fact that women would not nurture men throughout a lifetime; after a certain point, men had to take care of themselves. On this day, everyone fasted. All those things that had been “drawn-up” were displayed upon the altars, prisoners were pardoned, courts closed, amnesty granted, and Demeter as a “smileless statue” received worshippers while sitting on the ground rather than on Her usual throne. On this day of atonement the people placed marble pigs and other sacra on Demeter’s altars.

The third day of Thesmophoria was spent “sowing” all the “drawn-up” things once again in the good Earth—a sort of magical fertilization. Only women who had no death in their families could perform this sacred ritual of the “born fair,” “born beautiful,” or Kalligeneia. Afterward, feasting took place throughout the community and everyone danced while the music played. In this country, Thesmophoria has been transmuted into a “thanksgiving” ritual, without the matriarchal tradition of putting back into the Earth that which is received from Her.

The essence of most of these ancient ways leads us back to the beginning of matriarchal societies, where women were in charge of the dispensation of justice. Every year, when the women congregated for the traditional festivals, the part of Thesmophoria where public cursings and blessings were performed, even in modern times, was a remnant of witchcraft. The Goddess to be invoked, therefore, had to be Hecate the Witch Queen, She who is three-formed. Usually the High Priestess, dressed as Kore, sounded the bronze gong (associated with purifications), giving the final seal to all pronouncements. Later on, the clapping of hands replaced the gongs as the incantations were said in public places. Hence, the custom of clapping hands for performers today.

Spiritual beings who presided over the communal and ritualistic curses were not hated or despised or feared, but found to be quite

useful. They were referred to as the Averters, Those-Who-Send-Away, Protectors, or the Putters to Flight. Even today the seed of cursing hasn't changed from that of Thesmophoria. To "bind down" a person into keeping his promises, by the power of Hecate, still works. To "give over" the ills or bad-luck caused by someone is still the heritage of witches.

Ancient curses eventually developed into the modern vow and even prayers in the new religion are an offshoot of this matriarchal practice. The ordinances of many social orders came from this, and even regular "laws" as we know them finally also claim their origins in the Craft.

Stenia—Bitching Festival

This stunning festival takes place during Thesmophoria. Crones of the community were enthroned in tents made of fig branches while younger women tended them with food and drink. After eating, the younger women were turned loose to playfully harrass and insult one another, using all the "bad" language they wished. As evening came, the young women would continue to "abuse" each other through scurrilous jesting, name calling, throwing dirt clods and small stones, and wrestling with each other. This all took place in the tents, under the gentle supervision of the Crones, and was a powerful way to eliminate unhealthy feelings and unreleased resentments. Since it served to promote growth and new life in relationships, this "bitching" brought good luck to all those who observed it.

Skira—Festival of Images

This festival was a communal celebration of art—a festival of image making. This pagan feature has been much slandered and maligned as a worship of idols. Skira, however, merely provided the community with impetus to create sacred artistic statutes, usually images of Athena, out of gypsum. The gypsum, being snow white, represented mystical purity. The artwork done by the worshipper represented devout concentration and meditation on the Goddess. The finished work became a prayer offering to the Mother, carried in public by the artist. It is said that even such powerful men as Theseus carried such gypsum statues during Skira.

Modern efforts by scientists to uncover the past have yielded an overwhelming number of these pagan images, most of which are female in form. These are a testament to the votive artwork of the people, and some of these statues now sit in museums, proclaiming the validity of a religion that embodies creativity as a form of worship.

Haloe—Free Speech Festival

When Mother Nature was ready with her grapes, the Day of Cutting of the Wines was celebrated with Mysteries of Demeter, Kore, and the Son of the Goddess Dionysus. The pomp and circumstance included carrying first fruits through the streets of the city for good luck before offering them at Demeter's grove. After the Cutting of the Wines there was a communal dance on the "Threshing Floors," doubly used for cleaning grains and, in honor of the Grain Giver, dancing, sporting, and playing games. Special prowess was displayed, ritual showing off took place, and the general good humor of the people abounded.

After everybody was warm and high on the new wine, it was believed that purification from troubles could be achieved on many levels. Young people flirted with each other, and loudness and laughter were not frowned upon even by early sleepers. This was a pagan custom nobody wanted to change. Dancers came out to perform exhausting feats. The next day there were more local athletic events, during which men lifted logs and huge stones or even carts. Women cooked sumptuous feasts, flirted, and danced with each other in circle dances of the earth.

English archeologist Jane Harrison found Haloe celebrated in the midwinter season and later taken over completely by Dionysus. This, according to Harrison, is due to the incoming new god of the patriarchs, and his coming was a two-edged sword. On the one hand, worshipping Dionysus enabled women's mysteries to thrive into patriarchal times, with the worship of the god as hermaprodite—both male and female in one form. This allowed the Meneads, in particular, to accompany him where no men were allowed. On the more negative side, however, the festival was officially shifted from harvest time to midwinter in Greece, and completely assigned to a male god who, as time went by, shed more and more of his female characteristics and traits. Still the son of the Earth Mother, however, Dionysus, as the patriarchs modified him, was closest to having matriarchal status.

Haloe did remain completely dominated by priestesses, women descended from the Meneads. Hierophants were not allowed to offer sacrifices, and there was no blood offering or ritualistic killing of animals. Grains, barley, and honey cakes, and the first fruits of the harvest were what was offered at the communal feasts. We know this from one record of an ancient scandal, related by Demosthanes. He tells of a Hierophant who was cursed by a community because he dared to make a burned flesh offering on the altar of the ashara in the court of Elusias. "It was not lawful on that day to sacrifice an animal victim and the sacrifice was not his business but that of a priestess," claimed Demosthanes.

A newly discovered scholia from Lucian revealed a full account of Haloa, casting a new aspect to the festival. The women celebrated Haloa alone in order that they might have free speech! What an ingenious religious impulse. The sacred symbols of both sexes were handled and exhibited, the priestesses whispered into the ears of the women, and they whispered to each other things that were never uttered aloud. But then, there were things uttered, to the horror of men, things that women were not allowed to say at any other time. Quips and jests flew on Haloa. At the end of this festival there was a giant banquet. The recorder states that: "Much wine was set out and the tables were full of all the foods that are yielded by land and sea, save only those that are prohibited by the Mysteries: I mean the pomegranates and the apple and domestic fowls, eggs and red sea mullett and black-tail and crayfish and shark."

What was in abundance on those festival tables was varied and interesting—cakes shaped as female and male sexual organs (still seen in European bakeries), crepes filled with cream, diamond-shaped cookies with red raspberry filling inside. But in all of this, the flesh of animals was not eaten or desired. That particular custom was brought in later by Achaenas, who overran the gentle land of the Pelasgians.

Elusian Mysteries—Festival of the Returning of the Daughter

The most famous and revered seat of Goddess-worship was in Elusias, and although the rituals became polluted with Dionysian mysteries during patriarchal rule (as a way to survive), the splendor and prestige that was always attached to this holy place remained. Thus, we have some idea of what the matriarchal mysteries consisted of. The Elusian Rites began on September 13 and continued for the rest of the month.

New initiates were assembled on September 15 and a cry, "To the sea, ye mystics!" heralded a banishing procession on the 16th, when all concerned went to the sea for a purifying bath. For their part, community members took piglets and images sacred to Demeter with them to be bathed as well. (Note: Piglets were so important to Elusians for acting out Demetrian customs that when they were allowed to print their own coin, about 350-327 BC, they chose an image of the piglet standing on a spray of ivy. The other side of the coin showed the Goddess Demeter and Her Snake, seated upon Her throne with the Wheel of Fortune.)

There were different rites for the children. Nymphs passed

through fire for purification, followed by a mock fight, throwing stones at each other or wrestling. On the night of the 19th or 20th, all purified mystics made a procession back to the temples, where they were now fit to handle the sacra and holy foods.

An inscription from the fifth century BC reads:

Let the Hierophant and the Torchbearer command that the Hellenes should offer first fruits of their crops in accordance with ancient usage. To those who do these things, there shall be many good things, both fine and abundant crops; whoever of them do not injure the Athenians or the city of Athens or the two Goddesses.

And elsewhere:

I fasted, I drank the kykeon, I took from the chest, I put back into the basket, and from the basket into the chest.

These cryptic lines describe what the mystics did in their rituals, without telling us too much, since they were sworn to secrecy. For ancient people, this needed no explanation since everybody knew what was in the basket and understood what kykeon was.

The fasting is an obvious act of purification, sometimes accompanied by an herbal laxative (still used in some so-called primitive societies). After this, kykeon, which was a souplike mixture of vegetables and barley mixed with pale honey, onion, and Pramnian wine, was drunk. Some of this mixture was also poured out onto the ground as a libation for Demeter, but only before the wine was added.

"I took from the chest," refers to the sacra, which could have been tokens of good luck such as a ball, for a symbol of the Wheel of Life; a cone for fertility, as a symbol of virile manhood; a mirror for self-knowledge. Today there are covens that still use a mirror, given to new initiates with this command: "Look therein and see. Thou art Goddess."

"I put back into the basket," means that's where one put the first fruits one brought. The basket held loaves of bread and other good food, and was where the offerings were placed. *

"From the basket into the chest," simply refers to the completion of another cycle of life. One takes something from one place and replaces it in kind again, so that more can grow. The celebrant might have put grains back into the chest for the next year's harvest. Even a few grains would have done it in token, in the belief that ritualistically, it was done. Since there were very important moments in the social lives of the people, things that were placed back into the chest could have been personal spells, art, sacred images of the Goddess, clay or stone representations of sacred symbols, or healing prayers.

The Mysteries were not uniform, varying as rituals do today. Another version of the just-mentioned rite was: "I ate from the timbrel, I drank from the cymbal, I carried the kernos, I passed beneath the pastos." These were the words pronounced by other participants in the Mysteries.

The kernos was an agricultural tool, a winnowing fan that separated the grain from the dirt and dust, purifying it. It was also a vessel containing many smaller bowls, all set in a triple circle. In each bowl there was some natural product: white poppies, wheat, barley, pulse, vetch, ochroi, lentils. These things were carried by the celebrants, who "tasted from the timbrels" and then "drank from the cymbals," which were used to play music with as well. The pastos was a white umbrella that was often used for petitions for blessings from the Sky Mother. It was raised for the celebrant to stand under, with its four-pointed covering directing petitions to the four corners of the universe.

Mysteries were never quite confined to Demeter and Kore alone. Other goddesses had their rites performed as well (Ino, Hecate), and other male gods were added later (Hermes, Dionysus). In general, Mysteries such as these were "rites in which certain sacra are exhibited, which could not safely be seen by the worshipper until she had undergone purification."

Organization

A Coven or a Grove?

Whether you will have a coven or a grove is pretty much determined by the size of the group and the inclinations of the women involved. A Dianic coven is composed of thirteen people, twelve women and the High Priestess. In an open coven, if one of the members cannot be present, her place can be filled by any like-minded woman whom another coven member will vouch for. A closed coven is not open to visitors. An aspiring witch must wait until there is a permanent opening in the coven before she may join. A grove is a much larger, more open group. In a grove, there is no limitation on numbers; the only requirement is that all women be like-minded and seeking the path of the Goddess.

When the Susan B. Anthony Coven gathered for the first time, there were six women present. No one suspected that in nine short years, there would be over seven hundred initiated members! So now, technically, we are a grove, not a coven. Somehow the Goddess always organizes, and invariably there is a magical number of women present at all our Sabbats—either thirteen or twenty-six or thirty-nine.

Women often ask me how to find a coven. The answer is, if you don't have one in your area, start one yourself. It isn't hard and to create what you need makes you feel empowered.

Use your local women's bookstore for contacts. Write up a small notice with your telephone number on it and stick it on the bulletin board. Say something like, "I would like to start a Dianic coven. Please contact . . .," etc.

Then, when you have a few interested people, begin with a weekly study group, reading everything you can get your hands on concerning the Goddess movement.

During these sessions, hold hands at the beginning and meditate a few moments together, breathing, imagining the air filling up your lungs like wings. Breath connects us to life. You can live without food, or even water, but not for long without air. Say a few words to the Goddess of Wisdom, such as, "Sophia, allow us to learn from each other. Open our inner ears and inner selves to your knowledge."

When your study group is about to finish, repeat the beginning ritual. Hold hands, breathe together, and say, "Thank you, Sophia, Goddess of Wisdom, for the knowledge we received today. Help us to grow in your ways and stay with us. Blessed be."

In fact, whenever women gather together, for political meetings or otherwise, women holding hands in a circle focus the group better on the issues at hand. The touching and focusing bring diverse people's spirits together as one.

Naming a High Priestess should not freak you out. This lofty title belongs to our sacred past and therefore I maintain it. However, the job of "HP" is more that of a theatrical director, I found out. The HP watches the group's energy. She has to be skillful in making sure the group raises energy and directs it properly, for healing, personal needs, etc. In other words, the energy raised isn't just dispersing in an evening of hooting and hollering. I have been in many circles where energy is hardly ever raised.

People are sedated listening to somebody read from a book. Nothing is happening. My big fear is that if we don't dare go beyond books, we might lose the magic. Magic is an organic experience. It cannot be taught from books, only by creating it. Creating it is real. Experience will become knowing. I am sure you feel the difference.

How to raise energy is discussed in other places in this book, but essentially it comes from spontaneous chanting with or without words. The method of chanting comes from the HP. I always hum first with my groups. Just hum, with mouth closed, until the mucus comes off the vocal chords and a nice rich sound is floating about. Then we open our mouths and make a nice "ah" sound. After that I encourage women to chant in harmony or discord, but not to strain doing it.

When this energy is raised a bit, I ask the priestesses of the four corners to invoke their respective corners of the universe. After that, I raise the energy a little higher. Then the women come forward, lighting their candles and praying aloud, while we still hum below each word.

This ensures that people are constantly active on many levels, singing and listening at the same time.

When all the candles are lit, I raise the energy a little higher, this time chanting at full force and possibly graduating into a dance, circling the altar three times. Then we bless the food and drink, still humming; then we feast. No humming then. When we thank the four corners of the universe after our program, the humming begins again.

Never read in the circle. Memorize the lines if necessary. Improvise. Trust yourself.

Who is the High Priestess then? The woman who can do this high

energy raising with a group. Somebody with a bit of theatrical background, as well as Goddess background. The High Priestess is often the one who started the group.

Next, we have the Maidens, the Nymphs, and the Crones. Traditionally, the Maidens do everything the HP does, like assistant directors and players as well, since they do invocations. Maidens help with the altar, carrying the sacra up and down the mountains, making sure the people are all heard, and protecting the circle from disruptions.

One of the most outstanding Maidens I ever worked with was Helen Beardwoman, who could easily replace me when I was out of town. I was certain the Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1 would continue just as I had built it from the start.

Nymphs have a cultural role. Being the youngest in the group, they are depended upon to make sure the Coven has fun. Yes, fun! They collect appropriate songs, often can sing nicely, dance well, and laugh easily.

The Crones of the coven are the eldest women. Crones are not called on to work unless they want to. They can choose what they want to do. They can sit down if they get tired, or just sit in the middle and be revered as the Goddess in her wisdom aspect. Crones are often prophets. Oracular sayings might pass their lips or they might be impish or more rambunctious than the Nymphs. However, you never interfere with your Crones.

A coven is recognized if it has celebrated the holy days of the Earth for at least one year and a day. A coven has more than three people in it. In olden days, thirteen was a workable number for a coven. It still is, but it shouldn't be a rigid rule. Don't close a coven's ranks just because the membership has reached thirteen. Let the coven breathe. Closed covens don't last very long, in my experience. They become like ingrown toenails; they hurt at the end.

Today, the purpose of spirituality is not to imitate what went before, but to facilitate the future by bonding with each other as souls.

Laws of the Craft

Do as thou wilt and harm none.

HOW EASY THIS SOUNDS. Do what you want and don't hurt anybody. However, this is a very hard law. It requires your complete consideration of all with whom you share your planet. All living beings must be considered in the "harm none" clause. It is impossible to go through our lives without hurting others, willingly or unwillingly. We know that. We all get our share of disappointments and wounds, and we also deal out our own fair share. The law is not referring to normal living, the usual ups and downs. The law refers to the magical spells we weave. Those are the ones we have to truly examine and make sure we do not attack the innocent.

Besides this major law, there are some minor ones. For example, the law of the tenfold karma. If you are good, it will come back to you. If you help others prosper, others will help you prosper. The same applies for harming others; that too shall return. So there is no wisdom in manic hexing, for example.

Ethics Within the Coven

The only law there is is that you cannot steal a coven from the High Priestess. If a priestess started a group, and she led it, taught, and grew with the coven, a new member cannot just come up and say, "Let's leave our teacher behind now, let's get rid of her." If there is disagreement in the coven, the one who is in disagreement must leave. She may start her own group. In fact, this is a good way to propagate the Craft, but she cannot destroy the group that is already present.

The Craft is not a political organization. We operate on an ancient honor system. The High Priestess is seen as a female Elder, and therefore has powers others don't have. The High Priestess, for example, can ask members to leave if she feels they are disrupting her psychic space.

When the group gets too large and new priestesses emerge, it is wise to hive the whole group. Hiving rituals take place at

Candlemas. The new group stands in the middle of the mother group and they get blessed. The new High Priestess may give a short haggie about her purpose with the new coven and their common goals. Then each year, if possible, the new group rejoins the mother group on Midsummer's Eve. This is a traditional time to gather all the tribes together.

The best all-around policy is that you practice *politeness* to each other. That's when we can use the old titles; they breed respect. Lady Medea, Lady Circe, Lady Persephone. The word "lady" means "she who makes the loaf." Not a class title. Use each others' witch names. Practice calling each other names different than your regular ones. This language will help you to have dignity and to honor each other.

Finally, a word about power. She who puts out more work will accumulate more power. Work and power are in balance in the universe. So, if you want to reorganize the next meeting, summon the people, write a poem, recite a verse, dance, or sing, reveal it to the High Priestess. Or the Maidens. Or the Nymphs. Volunteer a lot. Be active. Whining and not having power usually gets you nowhere. Contribute and see how your power grows.

Seven Sibylline Sayings

by Erika H. Sophia

1. *Pain is the primordial evil.*

Therefore, the *First Saying* is: Actively interfere with avoidable, meaningless pain, wherever and however possible. (But in this, as in all things, first examine the total context, being sure that you keep all things in balance.)

2. *Pleasure is the primordial good.*

Therefore, the *Second Saying* is: Promote your own pleasure *as long as* it causes no pain either to yourself or to other feeling beings.

3. *Balance is the mainspring of the universe.*

Therefore, the *Third Saying* is: Seek balance in all things, sparing no effort to search for the deeper, more hidden balances of life and reality.

4. *Creativity is the secret of life.*

Therefore, the *Fourth Saying* is: Be creative *in your own way*, with your body, mind, and spirit, and with whatever resources come your way.

5. *Courage is the cardinal virtue.*

Therefore, the *Fifth Saying* is: Be courageous in every moment and area of your life—especially in fulfilling the first four Sayings.

6. *Consciousness is what makes us human.*

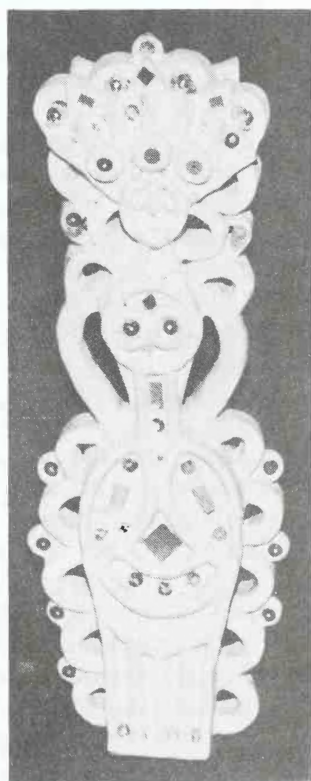
Therefore, the *Sixth Saying* is: Increase consciousness, your own and others, whenever this is compatible with the other sayings—and even sometimes when it is not.

7. *Celebration is a necessity for the spiritual life.*

Therefore, the *Seventh Saying* is: Rejoice that you are a woman, and celebrate your feminine nature in all things small and large, hourly, daily, and on special occasions.

—Reprinted from "*Thesmophoria*"

The Skills of Prophecy



Divination

WITCHES THROUGHOUT THE AGES were involved in finding things out. My mother "read" palms, but she confided in me that she really just had to hold someone's hand, and the stories about that person came into her head; she merely repeated what she "heard." She taught me how to read cards. It was a deck of thirty-two suits, and had subtitles in four languages. Mother always knew what was going to happen.

I believe we all do. The outlines of our lives have definite cornerstones that are predestined, but there are many choices as well. We all know before we reincarnate what it is we have come here to observe and manifest. The human organism must, and always does, block it out in order to survive the evolution of human life.

There are other forms of divination, such as the crystal ball, chicken bones, the I Ching. My favorite is the Tarot cards. I have read the Tarot now for twenty-six years. In February 1975, I was arrested for "fortune telling" to an undercover policewoman. I was tried in court in front of a full jury and convicted as a "guilty" witch. I also had to post \$2,500 bail, unheard of in such "crimes" as reading the Tarot. We appealed to the Supreme Court to remove laws interfering with practices of the Craft. The law was struck down in 1985 by the California Supreme Court. However, here I will show you this subversive science, a feminist interpretation based on twenty-six years of feedback.

As I said, my favorite means of divination is the Tarot deck, which I keep in a Hungarian hand-embroidered pagan folk-art cloth, red with golden edges. It is lined with silk, and I believe it was always meant to be a cards cloth and not the pillowcase I found it in. What I know about the origins of the Tarot comes from a story my mother told me, and since the patriarchy has no certainties, I will share it with you. Mother said it was originally designed about four thousand years ago, when Alexander the "Great" burned down the matriarchal libraries. Scrolls of knowledge and ageless wisdom perished in the flames, especially at the largest library in Alexandria. The existing scientists, partially matriarchal and partially (new) patriarchal, gathered at a conference to resurrect the living knowledge still in their heads. Being from different parts of the world, they had a language problem; so they devised the Tarot deck to communicate

with each other through symbols they all had agreed upon. Thus, the human condition was reduced into twenty-one forces, and later enlarged to seventy-eight pictures.

The Tarot, I suspect, comes from matriarchal origins. Those scientists didn't just make up a brand new thing in the world of divination.

The European fortune-telling deck has thirty-two cards, and though I prefer the more sophisticated Tarot deck, I use it according to European rules. My mother taught the system to me. She had learned it from an old witch, Victoria, who worked for my mother's house in rural Hungary.

I consider the Tarot primarily a tool for meditation. The Tree of Life, which is the format of the basic layout, comes from ageless times past, going back to early portrayals of the Goddess as a tree. The tree of life is a primary symbol of human evolution and understanding of the universe.

My method: Sit squarely and comfortably with the friend whose cards you are reading, and both of you anoint your hands with a purifying oil: van van, sandalwood, and myrrh are great.

I don't talk about anyone in particular while I shuffle the cards, but center myself—focus on the other person. I cut the cards with the left hand, toward the left, three times. Therefore, the first time, cut the deck in half, pick up the pile that is remaining, and place it on top of the other. Do this three times; each time think of inspiration (inspiration from the Nymph, Maiden, and Crone).

Then I give the cards to the other person. She also shuffles them until they are "cooked" (feel right), and then cuts the cards with the left toward the left three times, thinking about the inspiration from the Nymph, Maiden, and Crone.

Now I place the cards down, one at a time. The top (first) card is always the significator. Instead of choosing a card ahead of time, the querist "creates" (through the inspirational shuffling) her significator, which is indicative of her general condition. You can check this for validation with her. If the first card doesn't seem accurate, try the next card as a most discernible force around her. If it still cannot be validated, **give up the reading**. There is no shame in saying that this is the wrong time.

That hardly ever happens; in sixteen years it has happened to me twice. (Once the fates of the mother showed up instead of the daughter.)

Assuming things go smoothly, proceed to lay out the Tree of Life as shown on the next page.

The cards can show up in different positions, which make their meaning different. I interpret reversed cards the same way as up-right cards. You have to use your native wit to discern the meaning

that is attached to the cards themselves, and to the position they show up in. The two together, synthesized, make a good reader.

The significator (1) indicates the general condition, also the middle of the heart, of the querist. Covering it in the next position is the force presently acting upon the matter (2). The next card's position is crossing the previous one, meaning the obstacle (3) in front of the querist. Often the covering card and the obstacle card reinforce each other; in that case, note the strength it creates. These three cards constitute the "heart of the matter."

Above this is the general sky under which all other forces are occurring (4). This position influences all other cards and indicates an overall direction of the person's endeavors.

Under the significator card is the position of the "root" of the person's life (5)—often something that has already happened, which laid the foundation for the present situation. It often shows sorrows of the past, for example, but that only means the person has not quite forgotten it; it is not so much present troubles.

The past position is to the left (6). It must be the immediate past, nothing that was years ago. To the right (of the significator, as the one to the left) is the immediate future card (7), indicating a short time ahead, not years.

On the far right, moving one by one, lay out four cards, beginning at the bottom. First is the "self" card (8)—what it is the self is concerned with. This card is a reflection, and often is a correlation to the significator card. They must make logical sense together, since they are part of the same personality.

Next is the "house" (9) where the querist lives—forces around her in her dwelling.

Above that is the card of "hopes and fears" (10), which is just that: not fact, necessarily, unless in the major arcana, in which case it is fact.

The last card is the "outcome" (11), which shows a resolving of the conflicts. If it is a small arcana card, search through the next three cards for a major arcana to see a direction predestined for the end results. If you don't have it within three cards, forget it; just know the matter is going to take time.

Patterns are interwoven throughout the layouts. Look for the "reality level." This is in the middle section, including the heart, the past, the future, the house, and the fears. See the directions of how the person deals with difficulties. Look for courses of future behavior. Count aces; count queens. Take stock of the spread before you open your mouth at all.

Small arcana are choices; major arcana are predestined forces, which are karma.

Count up the suits to discover the person's "theme" of life. Any

predominant suit indicates the theme of the reading.

WANDS:	<i>work, growth, energy</i>
CUPS:	<i>pleasure, emotions</i>
SWORDS:	<i>struggle, challenge</i>
PENTACLES:	<i>money, earthly subsistence, and concerns</i>

Next, look at the numbers. If any repeat three times, that is like an extra card. Check your numerology; take it seriously. Themes sometimes emerge through the numbers.

Remember, the cards are to show wisdom. Never let a querist leave without hope. There is no ultimately bad spread. A good reader searches for the silver linings, and helps the querist face bad times with good counseling.

Meaning of the Cards (as I have found them)

Magician—Psychic talent for whoever gets this card. If the person is a witch, it is a good time to perform magical deeds, to direct psychic force. Matriarchal values overcome the patriarchy.

The High Priestess—Moral clarity; knowing what is good for you and what isn't. Teachings from the Goddess through dreams; could be the influence of a spiritual woman upon the querist; Dianic teachings (moon orientation in spirituality), woman orientation, often turning to the Movement. The querist takes herself more seriously and trusts her own judgment.

The Empress—This is the second aspect of the great goddess, Venus-Aphrodite, Lady of Plenty. She brings love relationships, but also fertility of ideas, inventions. She never comes up empty handed; enough to eat and boogie with. She brings woman consciousness, generosity into one's life, sunny outlook, feeling good. If opposed with swords, she wins in the end.

The Emperor—Preoccupation with power, and where power comes from; how to attain it, how to use it. The type of power this card represents, if matriarchal power, is a blending of spirituality with action. People who get this card are attracted to going back to school, getting diplomas, getting into public life, running for office, etc.

The Hierophant—A most patriarchal uptight card; legal dealings, not necessarily court dealings; signing one's name to legal documents as an equal partner; sometimes marriage, but only in a captive sense; not a good influence on women's lives.

The Lovers—Overcoming all obstacles; harmony, even new love affairs. This is a love relationship among equals.

The Chariot—Balanced force within; going into battle with the promise of victory. Sagittarius energies; go-and-get-it activities. Centered people get this card. Individualism.

Strength—This is Cybele, the goddess; queen of summer. She tames wild lions, controls situations with mind strength, influence; especially good accord when patriarchy is the enemy. This card promises that all will-powered events will come true.

The Hermit—This is a Virgo card and should have a woman pictured. Spiritual guidance from within, manifested in attractions and repulsions. Go with the inner force; heavy dreams when this card comes. Analysis, creativity, insights, leadership. The effects can last a long time.

Wheel of Fortune—Karmic turn for the better; new and lucky direction of one's life, predestined good events; just lie back and let things happen. The moves here are large; direction changes, goal changes, devotion changes even, but all for the better.

Justice—Here is the Goddess Themis as a dispenser of justice. Note her eyes are not blindfolded. Conclusions to large matters; legal dealings, definitely in court; end of a struggle; a just outcome. She it is who ends disputes, ends uncertainties.

The Hanged Man—This is an inside card. The mind undergoes a major turnabout, at least 180 degrees. It happens when the last piece of the puzzle floats in, and the woman has a "click" experience, clarified suddenly. It always precedes a major outside change; we all need these illuminations.

Death—This means death of an old way; death of a lifestyle, death of an old relationship. Only when swords surround this card does it mean death of a person. Note the dawn in the image; it is a two-way street; something dies, something is born. It usually means a radical change in one's life, even moving away from old environments. It is a positive card; women should not fear it.

Temperance—Supreme psychic management, good space, the ability to be active and balance within. Creative space, great for artists and priestesses.

The Devil—Bondage and ignorance. Often this means a voluntary bondage. Oppressive places of work are signified with this card. Also, long and uninteresting study at school; anything that takes your energies away without replenishing you. It can mean

sickness, being bedridden, being emotionally bound to someone who doesn't care for you, an obsession. Only with investigation of the matter and careful decision can this space be done away with. Ignorance has to be dispersed about the matter.

The Tower—A card of revolution; the cast in one's life is changing; a new act is coming in, with brand new players. Great upheaval, violence even. Watch out and keep calm. It is necessary that life takes turns like that, for the sake of evolution. Travel is the easiest way to fulfill it.

The Star—This is Hathor, the goddess of change. The space this card brings is of spiritual and intellectual questing, creativity, and hope. This is a time when the querist can influence other people, so it is a control card as well. It belongs to Aquarius, the waterbearer, and note that it is a woman. Another name for this priestess is Urania.

The Moon—The Goddess as Diana manifested here. A very important card; it means voluntary change. It is a slow change as compared to the Tower, and it comes from the querist's own decision. The change can come as character change; the person decides to incorporate new traits or discard some old ones. It is evolving a new personality from the present one, much as the dog evolved from the wolf, by human effort. It is a card of the moon, Cancer; it sometimes means hidden enemies if its position is surrounded with swords. Otherwise, it is a positive card of evolution.

The Sun—A card of Leo and the Sun Goddess Bast. A card of travel and liberation. It often means a new phase, starting with heightened consciousness; freedom is gained through understanding. When this card is in the layout, things work out for the person businesswise as well. Note the sunflowers in the picture. Sunflowers always mean business success.

Judgment—This is a card of rebirth and all that goes with rebirth. It is sometimes confusing, painful even, but rebirth is worth it. Denied, dead parts of the personality surface and demand development. Forgotten dreams are activated; forgotten goals get the spotlight again. Memories are stirred; go along with it. The end result is a new, improved you.

The Fool—This card is great for artists. Creative thought forms are about to materialize. Outrageous plans and lofty ideas can now be created for future realities. It is not so good for noncreative people; it means foolishness.

The World—The dance of life is portrayed here, the Goddess

Diana in the green circle of life. This card means affixing your name to creations (art, writing, etc.). It also means travel. A very creative space; try to use it for communication and yes, do travel with it.

As you may have noticed, my interpretations are markedly different from all books published about the major arcana. I often find patriarchal bias incorporated, especially where matriarchal images are involved. Distinctly positive cards like the Moon, Star, Hermit, High Priestess, and others are interpreted as reversals.

Minor Arcana

Wands

The wands are work-oriented and growth-oriented cards.

Queen—Magnetic personality, psychic, growth related. Also means business success. If it is a woman in someone's life, it is an impressive, energetic woman. The Queen means the soul of the personality.

King—Fiery person, can be male or female; the ego part of the personality. The process of working, expenditure of energy. If it is a man in someone's life, it is an honest one, growth connected.

Knight—Basic change of residence card, departures; the body of the personality. A young person in motion. Depending on where you find this card, the person is either coming toward the querist or leaving.

Page—Questing person; a youth, could be male or female; the spirit of the personality. A fiery young one, may be a new lover. Journey, though not a big one.

Ten—Oppression, too many responsibilities. Must have change of attitude to cope. Think more, sweat less.

Nine—Preparedness, suspicion. Having what it takes, awaiting trouble. Work on self-confidence.

Eight—Business, many goals, all approaching the goal, but not there yet. A busy lifestyle.

Seven—Courage. Feeling under seige but holding up admirably. Negotiations, bartering. Keep it up and you will have success.

Six—Victory after strife, moral victory most of all. Completion of a project where the querist has invested a lot of energy. Payoff time. Expressing oneself through a group.

Five—Strife, adversities, fights with people, competition for power.

Four—Completed work, time for celebration. Great accomplishment, prosperity, increase, felicity, beauty.

Three—Established strength, enterprise, trade. Management job, responsibility.

Two—Strength, dominion. Contemplation of worldly consciousness. Large plans.

One (Ace)—A new beginning, workwise. The querist has planted a new project, which is a fortunate move. Promise of growth, creation. The beginning of enterprises; new job, new school, new relationships.

Cups

Queen—Good luck woman, loving, psychic, pleasurable, intelligent. A beloved woman, possible water sign. Artistic.

King—Calm person, but could be violent within, psychic, emotional authority. If it is a woman, it is the ego of the woman (male-identified dyke). Holds pleasure for you.

Knight—Arrival of good news; often arrival of a new lover.

Page—Beloved youth, male or female. Holds pleasure for the querist.

Ten—Happy twosome situation, contentment, children, happy home. Well-balanced couple-life.

Nine—Physical and mental well-being. The "sitting pretty" of the Tarot. All is well.

Eight—Turning one's back to success (major concern, basic old goal) in order to search for something higher. Letting go. It is a lucky card, inspired by the full moon.

Seven—Illusionary success. A good card only if you are a witch who has thrown spells (spells deal with illusions). Otherwise, it shows many goals that can waste a lot of your time. (Make a list of the goals and sleep with it under your pillow for three days. In the morning, try to eliminate one, and arrange your priorities each day. On the final day, the last selection is where you should direct your energy.)

Six—Steady growth. Emotional growth in relationships, based on past memories. Memories become strength for you.

Five—Basic emotional depression card. Feeling of loss of pleasure. Disappointment in love (refocus if you can on the two cups unspilled).

Four—Indecision about where your pleasures come from. Emotional blah; you have choices but none of them turn you on.

Three—The three goddesses, Graces, toasting a good turn in your life. Happy issue. Much partying. Whoopee.

Two—This is an egalitarian loving relationship. It is based on exchanging pleasures. Harmony, partnership, love.

One (Ace)—This is a fertility card. Watch out if you are relating to men. Otherwise, it means happy space. Your cup overfloweth. You just fell in love. New emotional beginning.

Swords

Swords are associated with air thoughts, mental activities. More than that, swords are struggles.

Queen—This is a woman who has just been separated from her lover; a widow, a divorcee. Air sign woman. Matriarch with might. She initiates with ideas. A good fighter.

King—Authoritative man, egoist, possessive, and jealous. Bad news if it is a lover. Holds pain for you. Sometimes it means patriarchy itself, institutions that oppress the querist.

Knight—Attack, vengeance, aggressive space and activities.

Page—Initiating new projects, if it is the querist. It can also mean spying, overseeing, vigilance. If it is a youth in someone's life, it is a feisty one.

Ten—End of an illusion. Ignorance is dispersing about an obsession. Death of a pet project. Defeat. Focus on the dispersement of darkness.

Nine—Loss and tears. May be sickness. Depression.

Eight—Crisis. Not necessarily disaster, but things are at a point where it can swing either way. Indecision.

Seven—Victory after a struggle; won most, lost some. Learning new tricks.

Six—Leaving a bad space; heading for a new life but not quite knowing what it is going to be like. Sometimes a journey by water. However, it is really an inner card. Pain is left behind.

Five—Slander and disgrace. Being put down. Defeat and fights.

Four—Rest from strife, but not forgetting the pain. Deep mind is plotting the future through daydreaming.

Three—A broken heart, loss of a loved one. Separation without recourse. Sadness.

Two—Indecision, equal forces pull the querist each way. Ignorance about the issue.

One (Ace)—Conquest, overcoming opponents. An aggressive new beginning in projects, with the promise of victory.

Pentacles

Pentacles are associated with earth signs. Means subsistence, also money.

Queen—Moody, intelligent, soulful woman. Money connected. May be an earth sign. She is helpful and charming.

King—Money-connected man. Also, business where employment takes place. Encounter with a reliable male.

Knight—Steady income, reliable friend, contemplation on material matters.

Page—Reconsideration, contemplation, studies, intelligent quest. A youth, female or male. Serious, quiet, studious.

Ten—Interaction with many different age levels; much society, family. It also means prosperity and material gain.

Nine—Perfected work; a healer is pictured, so it is a creative work that this woman does. Leisure and relaxation after accomplishment (you are golden).

Eight—Crisis. Unfulfilled success, but almost there. An artist building up her credits, acquiring new skills, employment. A good money card, shows approach to goal.

Seven—Delay of money. Relax, it is only temporary.

Six—Unexpected money, gifts, lucky financial chances. You can even gamble now.

Five—Adaptation to new and difficult circumstances; learning a new way of existence. Also loneliness.

Four—Material possessions, property, serious money. Security, material success.

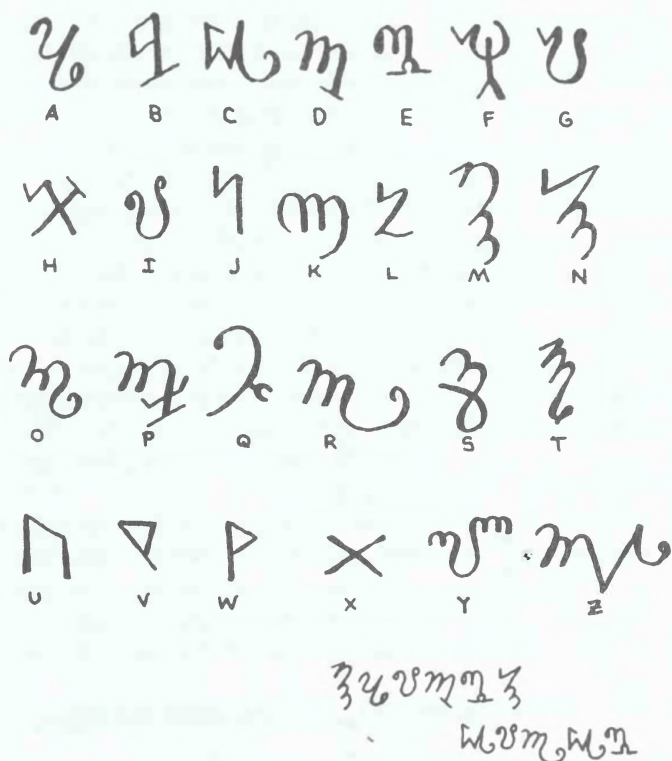
Three—Money for creative work as well as prestige. Also, building the church of the Goddess.

Two—Two major sources of income juggled. Two projects balanced against each other. The artist's way of making a living. It is a good card; existence without boredom.

One (Ace)—New financial beginning. Unexpected money. New enterprise with others' help; don't have to do it alone. Speedy intelligence.

The Runes

THE RUNIC ALPHABET is all that is left of the ancient Wiccan language that existed in the time of the matriarchies; the language died out during the Burning Times, when witches were afraid to speak it. The symbols vary somewhat from culture to culture; the ones given here are Theban. It is good to write your witch's name on your tools in them; if you are really ambitious, try keeping your personal *The Feminist Book of Lights and Shadows* in them. The Runes are part of our Her-itage, and we should use them whenever possible.



Astrological Birth Control

THE THEORY OF ASTROLOGICAL BIRTH CONTROL is based on the position of the moon in relation to the sun (phase of the moon) at the time of the woman's birth. Each month when the moon returns to the birth phase position, a second fertile period is possible. For instance, if a woman is born exactly at the first quarter, she can be fertile at each first quarter moon, as well as the usual fertile period regulated by the menstrual cycle.

To determine the moon phase at your birth, you can either consult a fairly simple paperback, *Natural Birth Control*, by the Aquarian Research Foundation, and compute your own, or have an astrologist do it for you. When you have the exact phase, you can use the information to get pregnant or prevent pregnancy.

To use as birth control, abstain from sexual intercourse for three and a half days before the exact phase and one-half day after. This must be used in addition to the rhythm method, abstaining five to seven days in the middle of the menstrual cycle, depending on the regularity of your individual cycle. These two times may coincide, lessening the total time of abstention. An alternative to abstention is to use a mechanical method of birth control during the fertile period.

To become pregnant, intercourse should take place twenty-four hours before the birth phase. If a woman was born during the period of time from ten hours before to ten hours after the full moon, she should avoid conceiving during full moon. Children conceived at that time too often have birth defects.

If a baby girl is desired, abstain altogether during the menstrual cycle fertile period and attempt to conceive on alternate months when the birth phase moon is in a feminine sign (Taurus, Cancer, Virgo, Scorpio, Capricorn, Pisces) of the tropical zodiac. This information is difficult to obtain for yourself, but an astrologist can compute it easily.

For a boy, the moon should be in the alternate signs.

The Sidereal Zodiac

by Anna Kria

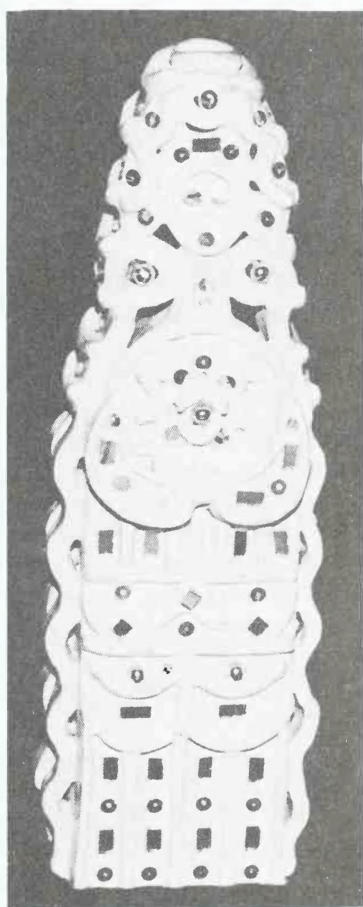
ASTROLOGY HAD ITS BEGINNINGS when people watched the never-ending motion of the heavens. The sky must have provided the ancients with a drama that kept them fascinated (and sometimes fearful) because they kept careful records of events as they related to the motions of the planets, the eclipses of the sun and moon, and the steady, stately flow of the sun on its celestial path.

But now the sky is dimmed by the lights of modern civilization and many generations of astrologists have failed to notice that their tables of planetary positions no longer match the actuality of the sky. This separation occurred when the incorrect assumption was made that the sun is always at zero degrees of Aries on the Vernal Equinox. This is not true because of the wobble, like a top, in the spin of the earth. The sun's position has been slowly receding through the sign Pisces, and in 2376 AD it will enter Aquarius, thus beginning the long-heralded Aquarian Age.

The non-sky-gazing astrologists use the Tropical Zodiac, while those who place the planets in the constellations where they actually appear use the Sidereal Zodiac. Since 221 AD, when the two zodiacs coincided, there has been a precession of approximately twenty-four and one-half degrees, which means that only those people born in the last six days of their tropical signs have their true sun sign. Everyone else has the preceding sign.

As a woman with a kinship to those wise women of the past who know when to plant, bless, curse, and harvest by our moon, I practice the astrology that is based on the reality of the sky as they knew it.

The Goddess and the God



Love: Understanding Aphrodite

THE GODDESS OF LOVE is the only aspect of the Goddess that has not been totally discarded, even though She has been negatively regarded and severely misunderstood. The Goddess of Love represents both beauty and wisdom and is the second aspect of the Triad. It is possible that this particular aspect of the Goddess survived patriarchy because of Her ability to bear children and Her relatively easy accessibility as a tool for men's pleasure.

In truth, the Goddess of Love is the Great Mother. It is Her seasonal condition to procreate, after which She bathes in water to regain her virginity. In mythological terms, childbearing never impairs or impedes the Lady's independence. The matriarchal Aphrodite always stood proudly naked, gently pointing out Her genitals as the Source of Life. She was muscular, strong, and dignified, with no coyness or submission evident in either Her gestures or facial expressions.

The Goddess of Love has many names, the most important of which are the ones connecting Her to the water element, because all organic life depends upon it. Thus, She is known as Aphrodite, Marianna, La Mer, Mary, Themis, Marina, Tiamat, Ua Zit, and Wurushemu, to mention a few. Her favorite name is Isis, who defines Herself as "She who binds hearts together." Notice that She does not mention sexual preference. She does not bind men with women exclusively, because a genitalia philosophy has no part in Her law or worship. Isis speaks to the hearts of people and generous play is Her favorite pastime.

All women served in the temples of the Goddess of Love. Priestesses who chose to live in the temples worshipped Her as Queen of Heaven by extending Her life-giving powers to impotent men. These Holy Women were violently attacked by the emerging Levite priests as whores and prostitutes, a deliberately demeaning epithet. Offspring of the qadishtu (Holy Women) inherited their property and name. It was not unusual for many generations of temple "family" to serve as Priestesses of the Lady.

This practice of "lying" with various men as an extension of the

life-giving Mother was the greatest obstacle facing the new patrilineal system because paternity was not at all important to the qadishtu. When asked who had "fathered" their children, they simply asserted that "All," or "Pan" was the father (referring to all that is male in Nature). Eventually, these women were murdered by Levite-incited riots, an early common way of committing matricide.

The sacred ritual of mating with members of the opposite sex did not exclude from worship the practice of pleasuring among women. Lesbian sexual practices were employed to dispel evil, to heal and prophesy, to make rain, and to raise any kind of energy necessary at a given time.

The Ancient Ones believed that a nation could experience serious difficulties (droughts, plagues, and other disasters) if the queens and princesses did not "loosen their girdles" for Aphrodite. One story is told of Thesius, whose mother was a royal princess. She went to the temple one night to serve the Goddess of Love as her oracle had said. In the temple she lay with a "sacred stranger" who turned out to be the King of Athens. Apparently it was possible to pull a few strings in royal service to the Goddess of Love, and parents of the women serving in the temple may have secretly prearranged meetings with particular "sacred strangers."

Sacred sexual practices included one known as "displaying," which was part of the sacred marriage ritual, performed by the queen and her consort for the good of the people and crops. On the first night that the queen and consort made love to each other, the royal bedroom was filled with officials and clergy, ready to pull the bed curtains in order to "display" evidence of the love-making ritual—namely, the man and woman locked in coitus. If the queen was happy and her cries of pleasure were loud and clear, this was considered a good omen and the consort was then treated as a king. If the queen was not pleased, the consort was considered an omen of bad luck, to be treated accordingly. Sexual loving was obviously not a private affair, but a healthy and positive public solicitation of good karma for an entire community.

Women on the island of Lesbos worshipped Aphrodite quite differently. This serves to give us a clue as to the variety and wealth of religious thought concerning sex. Sappho and her women worshipped Aphrodite in the form of creativity. They wrote love songs, carefully decorated their heads (dark-haired women wore purple ribbons while blondes wore flowers) and bodies, and spent their time and energy in constant scholarly pursuit of beauty and creativity within their lifestyle. Thus they worshipped their Queen of Love.

Of course, there were other schools of thought on the subject. The Goddess, whose worship was strongest in Her birthplace of Cyprus,

was worshipped with extensive sexual orgies. These celebrations took place on certain religious holy days such as Midsummer Night. The priestesses there would eat of the sacred *amanita muscaria* for increased muscular strength and then dance and revel in good feelings for three days and nights. These sexual rituals took place in the woods and forests, wild places where all sexes knew no bounds.

Remnants of these ancient sacred sexual rituals are today known as "the Great Rite," which is a very tame version of the original. It still is a challenging concept to most women in the Craft, although the pagan men get great mileage out of it, since during such rites the women change partners and lie with more than one man during a night. These celebrations have their origins in the earth religions and sympathetic magic.

Lovemaking energies do indeed stimulate the growth of crops. This was the reason that the Priestesses of Aphrodite would invite a fraternity of men to lie with them in the fresh furrows of the earth. Today, using the latest scientific machinery in their laboratories, men are measuring the vibrations and sounds of plant life. The result? Lovemaking does make a plant excited, and does stimulate its growth.

Indian pagan customs include one particular tradition regarding the healing energy of sex. A sick person is placed in a room where a young couple mate, in the belief that it will improve the condition of the ill person. More and more people today are able to relate sexual energy to healing energy.

Love and this business of "binding hearts together" is still the most desperately desired of human endeavors, and the most taxing. Patriarchs continue to pompously strut their power, but it is Aphrodite who has every human animal by the heartstrings. She can be a harsh and exacting mistress when Her rules are not obeyed, and not one of us goes through this life without feeling Her touch.

Mythically, the Goddess of Love is supposed to "play." She is not meant to marry or make commitments, or sign contracts or raise children, but to **play**. If there are any attempts to place any reins upon Her at all, She flees. People continue to be lovestarved because Aphrodite is misunderstood. She was kidnapped in order to breed the patriarchy into power, but She comes back in Her own might with a mixed-breed children of war, incurable venereal diseases, the rebellion of women (Her most faithful expression), and porno-literature wars. Her symbol, the Sacred Yoni, is blacked out even on the front pages of the most blatant sex-exploitative magazines. Men unconsciously still feel that to degrade the Goddess is bad luck. In this, at least, they are right.

In the Women's Movement, we have woven different webs of Aphrodite (She is a great weaver, like Her sacred animal, the spider)

in the form of sisterly love. Aphrodite loves equality and loves Her womenfolk. She is not quite as fond of fighting as Her sister, Artemis; thus, women attracted to the worship of Aphrodite are not the fiercest fighters in our revolution. The Lady even finds it necessary periodically to sink productions of sisterly endeavor, playing Her game of yoni-power politics. Because our headset is still based on a scarcity-conscious politic, Aphrodite is often able to cut right to the quick. "There is only one lover for me." "It is much too hard to risk another love." "There is not enough love to go around." "He loves me, he can't possibly love somebody else as well." Inner monologues such as these are the trickiest to overcome for women not in touch with the abundance and bounty of lovely Aphrodite.

The movement of women toward liberation has nourished a variety of loving. We have massages—Love heals. We have discussion groups—Love touches. We have radical therapies—Love grows. We have spirituality, prophesy, and ESP—Love communicates. We have creativity and art—Love shows. We have our casualties—Love frees. We have information sharing through publications and many points of view—Love feeds. We have fun—Love plays, and to keep Her well, She must.

Aphrodite, the Oldest of the Mothers—the original Door for existence—must be cultivated consciously in order to gain Her rich blessings. Witches perform love spells upon themselves, and sometimes upon each other, but we do not think that then we control the Lady who plays. The most difficult spell in the world is to light Her fire, because that is something to which She attends personally. She operates always from a prosperity consciousness. She is Lady Plenty of the Flowing Emotions, defiantly enduring amid patriarchal abuse, and delightfully unpredictable in matriarchal temperament. She is being awakened more and more by the women, and love is changing as a result, like never before. Indeed, the only chance for humanity is the absolute return of the Goddess of Love, sweet Aphrodite, She who binds hearts together and then plays.

Aradia: Female Avatar

IT WAS A TIME OF CRISIS on the earth, long after the Beginning Birth of all things. The few rich oppressed the many poor, making them slaves and causing them to suffer in poverty and toil in wretchedness. The lives of the poor were so hard and miserable that they cried out piteously for help.

So it was that the Great Goddess became concerned for the poor children of the earth, and decreed that Aradia be spirit-born and sent to earth as a mortal. The Mothers of Aradia were the Sun and Moon, who multiplied and divided their Goddess-essence, weaving Aradia from the vibrations of the luminaries of the solar system surrounding earth. Manifest as a human woman, the Divine Daughter, Aradia, became Goddess incarnate.

Descended to earth, Aradia (Herodius) became the first of the witches. Spirit-born and mortal-manifest, Aradia fulfilled her Divine Purpose: to teach the oppressed the Craft of the Wicca. She dwelt among the people and carefully taught them the Mysteries and Secret Arts by which they could free themselves from their oppressors.

It was to the poor that Aradia came; it was to the oppressed that the Craft was given. In the Schools of Aradia were taught the arts of herbal cures and poisons; of ritual and prophecy and enchantment; of music, poetry, and dance; of the knowledge and secrets of power. Aradia it was who taught the ways of freedom to the slaves of the rich.

When She had given the children of the Goddess all the techniques of the Craft, Aradia returned to Her Mothers, leaving behind a "Charge" to be used to call on Her in need. Having all this, the bound were to be bound no more.

Nineteenth-century witches, as evidenced by writings contained in Charles Leland's *Gospel of Witches*, were militant about their liberation. Preferring lives of nomadic lawlessness to slavery and imprisonment, these "folk" were taught how to poison their oppressors, how to cause them to die in their own palaces. Rich landowners were to be hexed with ruination of crops, with tempests, lightning, terrible thunder, and hail. Additionally, the "new" priests of the

male-god trinity were called devils and denounced as perpetrators of evil by the witches of the nineteenth century. Aradia promised revenge and rectification.

Feminist witchcraft at the end of the twentieth century is a tame echo of the rage hidden behind the history of the survival of the witches. The rage expressed in ancient poetry of slaves, rage about conditions so horrifying that violent reprisal was warranted. And all this rage in the face of witch murders that were barely ending when Maddalena collected the folklore of Aradia for Leland. The religious war of the rich upon the poor, the direct attacks of the male-god priests against the Goddess-worshipping witches, has only been transmuted—it has not gone away.

Conditions that originally prompted the sending of the Female Avatar, Aradia, are true today just as they were a century ago. As the daughter of Diana, Moon Goddess and Mighty Huntress of the Night, Aradia's purpose on earth was to teach. She did not marry, breed, or consort with men during the time She dwelt among the oppressed of the earth. Witches of the Dianic tradition follow Her example, concentrating on the development of psychic powers, the teaching of the skills of the craft, the recovery of Women's Mysteries, and the perpetuation of woman's natural connection to the Female Life Force. We believe that Aradia, Goddess incarnate, is all women who come to a female-identified consciousness, to a social consciousness of the oppression of everything female, and who dare to fight for their own rights and the rights of their children.

The God

*Hoof and horn, hoof and horn
All that dies shall be reborn . . .*

*Corn and grain, corn and grain
All that falls will rise again . . .*

WHO IS THE GENTLE GOD PAN? Why is he endowed with hoofs? Why does he wear horns? Why is he naked? Why?

In a society where the male is totally socialized, made antiseptic with clothes, deodorants, designer hairdos, cosmetics, and designer smells, it's hard to visualize the Male Principle of the Universe. What does manhood mean without violence or competition?

We pondered these heady questions, and more, in my workshops from the Midwest to Alaska to the Bay Area.

There was a time when the great god Pan was pronounced dead. In the Mediterranean countries, where worshipping him was at its most vigorous, the last of his altar's fires went out. However, today I think he is being reborn again, returning to a more understanding world that's missed his presence.

Pan (meaning all that is male in the universe) wore many names: Bacchus, Dionysus, Zagreus, Jove, Dios, Satyr, to list a few. He is the essence of manhood; he is wild, he has a glint in his eye. Today we would label him crazy. He is utterly free. He is not, however, dangerous to women. He is not a rapist, not a violent male. He likes to party, he enjoys sex, and is ever ready for it. He is not possessive (his women are free, too). He wears horns not because he is cuckolded, which is silly, but because he represents the animal kingdom as well, hoofs, hairiness, nakedness, and all.

Pan loves solitude, too. I talked to modern men who have seen him around lakes, in the Rocky Mountains, in the deserts. The great god Pan is here.

Pan appears to groups who call him. His power, a sexual love of life, permeates us all when we feel good. Women contain him; he is within us just as he is within men. Pan is a dancer, a magician, a healer, a priest. He is the son of the Earth Mother. He has total communication with all that is natural. As Dionysus, he could make water spring from rocks. As Pan, he could dance wildly for five days and nights without stopping to rest. As Jove, he initiated young men into men's mysteries, wielded thunder, became the fire god.

Pan is bisexual or pan-sexual. Shame had to be invented in order to get rid of all this freedom he bestowed on his followers. Guilt had to be invented and his people threatened with eternal fires to make them give up their wildness, their freedoms. Pan, finally, is the divine artist, Bacchus, who attends festivals and plays the Pan pipes, which makes all who hear glad.

Christians took one look at him and decided this was going to be the bad guy, their devil, to offset their good guy, Jesus, in his long white nightgown. Jesus only related to his mother, Mary, and to Mary Magdalene. The Virgin and the whore, because of Jesus, became archetypes for women to emulate. Women still suffer from this stifling, unnatural demand.

Pan, on the other hand, related to women as women. As full, complete, sexual human beings, in all walks of life, including the priestesshoods. Chastity didn't have any particular merit with Pan since he didn't seek to control women's sexuality. He paid a high price for his feminism. His image was stolen and made into that of the devil incarnate.

Many other elements went into the creation of the devil. For example, the sun goddess Lucina herself, masculinized and renamed Lucifer. A fallen angel, the fallen goddess of the sun.



But back to Pan. Was he warlike? There are no accounts that he ever fought with anyone or attacked anyone. Apparently he didn't need violence to assert his masculinity.

Was he competitive? In making music, there were songfests, dancing contests, wrestling matches, and foot races dedicated to him. You see, Pan had nothing to prove. He didn't have to work on his manhood; he felt secure about it.

In some ways, his priests had sacrificed a goat for him, especially mountain goats, but they ate them as well so it wasn't cruel or wasteful.

Negative sides to Pan? Yes, there were some. Obsessions, for example, with sex. He had the energy to obsess about people, issues, feelings. Lack of good judgment and poor decisions can result from that. Overindulgence is another flaw that can appear when the Pan energy is misused. The pleasure principle, without moderation, can get out of hand, as people have found out. Only Pan can indulge himself without paying a price.

Pan, our dear pagan god, however, is not evil. What is evil? Look at Mother Nature. She creates disasters, destruction, and she is not considered evil. Human beings have created much evil in the world, most of which were acts against Mother Nature. It really boils down to waste. In nature, everything has a purpose, wisdom, a place. There is no displacement of materials. No design to hurt, only to continue.

Ultimately, my definition of evil is ignorance. Everybody has a little of it. Ignorance coupled with the power to act usually winds up hurting people and the environment; hence it is evil.

About the Author



Zsuzsanna Emese Budapest was born to an artist-psychic mother, Masika Szilágyi, who was from a long line of herbalists and healers and spiritual women. Z's grandmother, Ilona Szilágyi, was a suffragist who, along with her husband, ran the family herb store, which today is a pharmacy. Ilona was active in working for the right of women to make their own living; she taught trades to women and helped to open schools for young mothers. The family tree has been traced back to the thirteenth century, to 1270.

Z grew up in Budapest. After witnessing the Hungarian Revolution, she escaped to the West, continuing her high school studies in Innsbruck, Austria.

She won a scholarship to the University of Chicago, and got married. After the birth of two sons, she dropped out. Her marriage to Tamas, a childhood friend and fellow immigrant, lasted seven years. They parted amiably when she turned thirty years old.

The Saturn cycle in her life introduced her to a new world of American feminism, where she found the spiritual component missing. She decided that the spiritual liberation of women would be her contribution. During a time when such an idea seemed rather zany, she started the Susan B. Anthony Coven Number 1. This work caught the karmic winds; she spread her wings over the souls of

women, who soon found the Goddess, and many new covens sprang up all over the nation. The concept of self-led, self-developed groups of women bonding as souls proved to be the beginning of the Third Wave of Feminism in this country—Spiritualized Feminism.

Z then ran into the law. In 1975, in Los Angeles, she was arrested for reading Tarot cards to an undercover policewoman. This was in violation of M.C. 43.30, and she was tried and convicted for foretelling the future. She appealed this law for many years; it was finally overturned in a case concerning a palmist from Long Beach. Now Z can read cards however she likes.

Z has become well known in the lecturing circuit for her charismatic speeches. She channels the Goddess, never speaking unless she is inspired. She has popularized the Goddess through her radio shows, television appearances, and articles she has written, lives she has touched.

The last big publicity event happened on July 16, 1986, when she was invited to speak at the Santa Teresa Library in San Jose, California. Fundamentalist church groups decided to picket her appearance, protesting her impact on the minds of those in the audience. About five hundred Fundamentalist Christians tried to silence her, but she asserted her right to believe in the Mother Goddess, rather than the patriarchal biblical God.

Zsuzsanna's life work involves the promotion of life, peace, and women's rights. She says: "When women change, everything changes. If we concentrate on changing women, we can turn the world around in her hour of near annihilation."

The other book by Z. Budapest is called *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries*, Volume 2, which is organically part of this book, Volume 1; it emphasizes the rites of life and contains more spells and Goddess stories.

About the Artist



Masika Szilágyi was born in rural Hungary to a suffragist mother, Ilona, who founded trade schools for girls and became the first congresswoman in the country. As a youth, Masika was a poet and medium. She wrote poems of invocations in trance states, and sometimes spoke ancient Egyptian. Through her poetry she won a scholarship to Paris, where she began her studies as a ceramic artist and sculptress. She continued her studies at Budapest University, and erected two statues in the capital city before she was twenty-five years old.

Masika went through much hardship during the war and afterward emerged as the only artist who taught maimed, homecoming soldiers how to paint with their teeth if they lacked arms, how to throw the wheel with only one leg, etc. She then worked in a factory for exports, and finally in 1956 began her career anew, having her first show in Budapest, followed by many others.

Masika was a folk artist, maintaining pagan symbolism and Goddess portrayal in all her works, as well as honoring peasant rebels and other historical figures. She remained a beloved artist of the people, still reading the palms of those she loved and telling her "dreams" each morning after communing with the dead at night.

She died on April 19, 1979, to the deep sorrow and loss of us all.
Blessed Be!

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